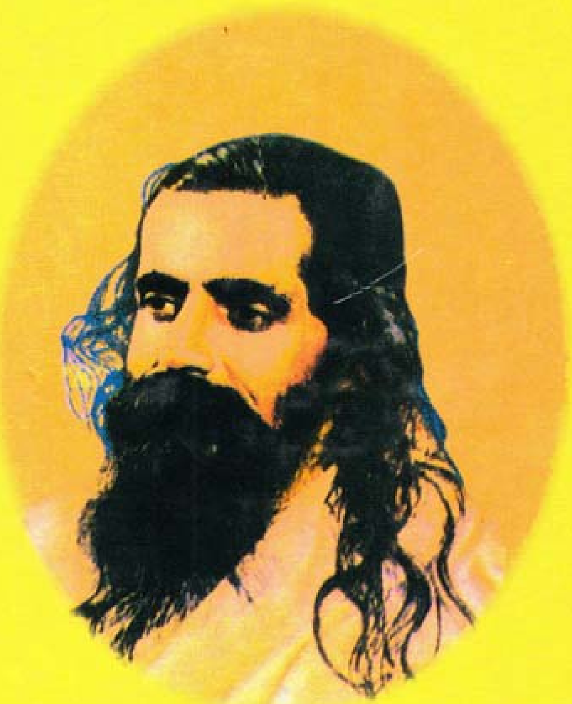
BUNCH OF THOUGHTS

M. S. GOLWALKAR



Bunch of Thoughts: Book

- *M. S. Golwalkar*

Publishers: Sahitya Sindhu Prakashana
14/3-A, Nruptunga Road,
Bangalore - 560 001 (INDIA)

First Edition: February 1966
Second Edition: 1980
Third Edition: 1996
Reprint: October 2000

ISBN 81-86595-19-8



Preface to the Third Edition

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, or, as more commonly called, the RSS-was started in 1925 on the day of Vijayadashami. The founder, revered Doctor Keshav Baliram Hedgewar, passed away in 1940 handing over the charge to Sri Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar, popularly known as Guruji, who continued to be the chief of the organisation till 1973.

The present attempt to collect some of his i.e., Shri Gurujis thoughts has made us feel like picking pebbles on the shores of an ocean. The impossibility of compressing in a single handy volume the various thoughts that he had expressed for full 33 years of his stewardship of Sangh in thousands of his speeches, talks, discussions, and informal conversation covering a whole range of national topics is obvious. What is attempted here is just to present his viewpoint on various topics in a comprehensive manner. With this end in view, some of his ideas are strung together under different heads. However, we do not claim any exhaustive exposition of the topics under each head.

Moreover, most of his speeches were in Hindi. The force and diction of his chaste Hindi and the inspiring images they bring up are bound to suffer while rendering them into other languages, especially to a foreign language. Naturally, the ideas contained herein are his, but the words are ours. As such we are keenly aware of the shortcomings of these words and expressions. Burdened though with all such anxieties, what made us take up this task is the confidence that the radiance of his thoughts will outshine all these dark spots and illumine the national mind. As the following pages will bear out, the thoughts of Sri Guruji, are proving a beacon-light in the confused state of our national mind even to this day. The crisis in our country is more intellectual and mental than physical. Whatever physical maladies are seen today ravaging our body - politic have their roots in the mental

weaknesses and intellectual perversions of the leadership at the helm of our national affairs. Often these failings strut about masquerading as high ideals trying to cover up their disastrous effects. Sri Gurujis ideas have the intensity of warmth and light to dispel all such darkness and charge the nations mind with right vision and the spirit of right action.

Since its publication, nearly three decades ago, the book has been brought out in almost all the major Bharatiya languages. It has indeed stirred the thinking sections of the country and even abroad. It is clear that it had met a long and deeply felt need.

It is no exaggeration to say that thousands, if not lakhs, have been inspired by the living thoughts in the Bunch. As Prof. M. A. Venkata Rao, in his Introduction, says "It will be seen how full, how positive, how patriotic, how practical and idealistic at the same time, the principles and methods of nation-building adopted by the Sangh are, as adumbrated by Shri Guruji."

As could be expected, these thoughts cover the eternal and abiding aspects of our national life, as also the current and the contemporary ones. This is quite natural. Analysis of the burning problems of the day with suitable anecdotes and examples do help to emphasise, and highlight the permanent principles. The excellence of Bunch of Thoughts lies precisely in this. The abiding values, which should form the warp and woof of our national fabric, are again and again imprinted on the mind of the reader.

In this Third Edition we have added the Index and effected some typographical correction, which had remained in the Second Edition. A short biographical life-sketch of Shri Guruji and some of his thoughts prior to and during 1947-48 are two more new features of this Edition. We are sure that the present Edition too will meet with the same enthusiastic and enlightened response

that greeted the previous ones. The nations continuing demand for ***Bunch of Thoughts*** is amply proving that it is a Philosophy of Thought and Action par-excellence, with its appeal as eternal as the nation itself which it seeks to resurrect and re-build.

We offer our heart-felt homage to late Prof. M. A. Venkata Rao, a scholar of vast erudition and great depth of vision, to whom the book is dedicated - for his excellent Introduction.

We are grateful to Shri V. S. Godbole of U. K. for his detailed observations which have helped us to improve and update the present Edition in a few respects. Our thanks are due to all those whose loving co-operation has made this arduous though pleasant task, possible.

-- PUBLISHERS

Introduction

Independent India is engaged in a many-sided renaissance and reconstruction more or less consciously directed to what may compendiously be called nation-making (or remaking) in an image more adequate to the needs of the present and future of India as a strong, creative nation guiding the destinies of its people in accordance with a worthy and inspiring charter of life.

This era commenced roughly with the emergence and work of Raja Rammohan Roy in the beginning of the last century and has continued to the present day through the life-effort of notable thinkers in many fields like Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, Swami Dayananda, Sri Aurobindo and Lokamanya Tilak, Gandhi and Tagore, Dr. Hedgewar and Veer Savarkar. These are only typical names and do not exhaust the galaxy.

In the present phase of the struggle (and triumph) with the British Power (typifying the entire gamut of foreign ideas and ideals) we have a similar period as in many periods in the past of the self-recollection and re-assertion of the national self-consciousness and of a conscious search for the roots of our culture as the living points on which we may regraft current life and foster it to vigorous growth and power. In this many-sided effort, the image of Indian culture as the pattern of nation-building is laid over with many confused notions from the West and from distorted ideas of the past of our own life.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi introduced a powerful leaven into this maelstrom of ideas, impulses and images having many elements congenial to the spirit of Indian Culture. Thus the national liberation movement of M. K. Gandhi derived power from the cultural heritage indwelling in the sub-conscious mind of the people. But unfortunately as the political motif was dominant in the Gandhian movement, the cultural forces it invoked and

mobilised were not grasped in their genuine purity and power and were not related naturally and organically to the ideals of politics, economics, social order and values and the many dharmas of the living past. They were all mobilised as vague sources of inspiration against the common enemy, namely the foreign rulers. They afforded no positive pattern of the new Indian society and state, economy and social order that was to replace the present order of things under long foreign rule. It was mainly negative, the many types of leaders following the Mahatma being content to put off decisive thinking on positive lines for the post-liberation epoch. Thus we find the Mahatma choosing a person with nothing in common with his ultimate ideas on man, nation and God like Jawaharlal Nehru to succeed him as the national leader. The Nehru Mind is made mostly abroad and in spite of his Discovery of India, Sri Nehru never succeeded in catching the spirit of Indian culture at its best. Thus the blueprint of the new society he is using as Prime Minister and leader of national reconstruction for building independent India is the "socialist pattern of society" which is infinitely more abstract and superficial, more mechanical and charged with unsolved problems of class conflict than the foundational ideas of the past.

It is this lack of a positive idea of Indian society at its best, accumulated and moulded through centuries of culture and civilisation (that is yet alive in the subconscious of our people in all their ranks) that is so disappointing in the current efforts led by Government and official and authoritative leaders for national renovation. The failure in education is the most signal indication of this grave lacuna. Indian education has some of the most creative features making for sublimity and a uniform level of success in character formation influencing life in its inmost springs. But the failure of the present leadership in this field is total in character and reveals an entire absence of any inward grasp of the spiritual climate of Indian education in its essential quality and pattern.

The failure of Indian history to assimilate the Muslims into the national society, as it had succeeded in assimilating the earlier invaders “ the Shakas, Scythians and Hunas “ is a notable fact which the new Indian leaders of national liberation ignored altogether. They committed the blunder that by giving concessions to Muslims at the cost of the majority, they could win them over! The sequel showed that it was a tragic blunder. No concessions given without change of ideology on the part of the recipients could bring about the change needed.

Assimilation is possible and necessary but it requires the right philosophy and right psychology, the right strategy and tactics. But Indian leaders proved incapable of evolving any such change of technique. They persisted in their colossal blunder until they had to vivisect the motherland. They retain the same blundering techniques even today and are thus encouraging further Pakistans! From another point of view, too, the Weltanschauung of the national liberation leaders has proved too negative and therefore sterile and frustrating. This concerns the right relation India under independent auspices should envisage towards modern Western civilisation. It is too often forgotten that Hinduism is not merely a sect. A small religious fellowship concerned exclusively with modes of worship or social customs peculiar to it. The word Hindu in this context has a national character. It is tantamount to the word Indian “ i.e. pertaining to a people living beside the river Sindhu. It connotes the entire culture and civilisation of the Indian people from pre-historic times developed on Indian soil through millennia.

During the Gandhian era, the idea of developing a Hindu civilisation stemming from the living roots of the past and assimilating the best of the present Western pattern of values had the dominant place in the thoughts of some leaders. Gandhis little book Hind Swaraj is symptomatic of this desire, though there was no agreement on all sides with the ideas adumbrated therein.

But today we find that the alien, unassimilated, crude, class-war-ridden, monolithic social structure associated with Marxism is influencing the structural ideals and actual policies of the authorities without any re-assessment of ideas so essential to such a vast and fateful undertaking.

Here too the vacuum in the sphere of Indian cultural ideas in the minds of leaders in authority is being filled up by ideas and ideals unsuited to national renovation. The iconoclastic method seems to be taking the upper hand in preference to creative reform.

In both spheres, namely that of the minority assimilation into national society and that of the assimilation of Westernism (both its politico-social philosophy and its science and technology) India needs to adopt a more positive and more creative policy with a clear vision of the best features of Indian society at its best and of the enduring element of nationalism and Westernism in just proportion and with sure insight into their human significance.

It is significant that this more concrete point of view attained form and substance in the organisation founded as early as 1925 at Nagpur by Dr. Hedgewar. The philosophy and history that his movement known as the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (literally National Volunteer Corps) embodied belong to the more positive, concrete inspiration that was so lacking in the more dominant Gandhian movement that captured the headlines on account of its immediate political interest and the urgency of national liberation.

In addition to the right philosophy and history of Indian culture, Dr. Hedgewar hit upon a unique method of training the young through a course of mental and physical exercises. In its combination of mind and body for training, the Sangh technique of education reminds us of the main features of the Platonic System of Music and Gymnastics. By music plato meant the

whole range of the arts and sciences “ history, philosophy, science and the fine arts. By gymnastics, he meant physical exercises for developing a sound mind in a sound body, with health and bodily condition responding to the higher impulses of the soul like the veena in the hands of the musician. Music must pervade the body. Looking at the exercises of the young volunteers in the Sangh, the observer sees how closely they succeed in realising the ideals of Plato. Plato included courage as one of the cardinal virtues and so too the Sangh instructors stress courage and the virtues needed for resisting wrong and aggression.

The current aspersions against the R.S.S. mostly by Congress leaders and followers to the effect that it is a communal organisation and more dangerous to the country than even Communism are a travesty of the fact.

The present collection of thought expressed by Parama Poojaneeya Guruji Golwalkar on different occasions to Sangh workers and public in many parts of the country over two decades and more, serve to bring together the outlines of the philosophy and history of Indian culture as well as the technique of nation-making followed by the Sangh as laid down by its founder Dr. Hedgewar.

To appreciate its full role as perhaps the most influential movement of cultural reconstruction in the land today (which has spread practically to all parts of the country from the Punjab to Madras), it is necessary to eschew the petty-minded criticisms of ignorant and jealous opponents that it is communal or merely Hindu in any derogatory sense.

It is based on a philosophy of national culture and envisages the whole of the nation.

The outlook it offers has room for all minorities on condition of their whole-hearted submission to the supreme value of the nation in their lives. The nation is the vehicle of universal truths and is not an entity above them. This is no chauvinist nationalism of the kind associated with Mussolini and Hitler in the recent West.

It teaches loyalty and devotion to the national society in the national homeland under the image of the Mother. The unity and solidarity of the Motherland is taught to claim the highest sacrificial devotion from the citizen body. Whoever enters into this spirit of devotion to the nation as a spiritual unity of land and people are Indians or Hindus in essence. The mental commitment should be final and supreme.

This is quite consistent with different groups and sects retaining their own modes of worship and social customs so long as they do not conflict with social cohesion.

The Muslims, Christians and Jews etc., have perfect upasana swatantrya, freedom of worship so long as they do not seek to destroy or undermine the faith and symbolism of the national society. They should subordinate their exclusive claims for final and sole revelation vis-Ã -vis the national society. They could bear witness to their faith in life and speech but they should not indulge in any unfair and unspiritual modes of conversion.

The national identity requires that the whole of national society including minorities should share in the best values of the past. They should appreciate national dharma “ the code of ethical principles and ways of life enshrined in the best usage. In cultural history, they should all give their mind and hearts whole-heartedly to an appreciation of the best types of Rama and Krishna may be appreciated by non-Hindus as secular examples while the Hindus will see them as full spiritual exemplars (avatars).

The national history of the Muslim period should be re-written giving the truth without varnish and all should appreciate the best values exemplified by the heroes of authentic history.

Thus these thoughts go on to delineate quietly and patiently the portrait of the best Indian society and pattern of values in all spheres of life and culture, philosophy, art and social order, that the Sangh seeks to hold before the mirror of the national mind.. To see the wood in spite of the bewildering number of trees that crowd the landscape, it is necessary to see in a birds-eye view the full design of the landscape after which details will fall into an illuminating order.

Pride in the cultural heritage of the past is the recurring theme of the lectures. Chapter after chapter points to some aspect or other of the features that bear inspiring value for present emulation in social life and incarnation into individual character and personality.

Enough is said to vindicate faith in the best values of inherited culture and its capacity to afford guidance even today.

1.Philosophy: Darshanas: Vedanta as the typical philosophy of India envisages a vision of the universe steeped in Spirit fulfilling a life of eternal joy. Individual souls as sparks of such a supreme cosmic spirit have the divine destiny of realising universality and becoming godlike. This assures equality of spirit among all souls. What higher basis for democracy can we have than this? What greater stimulus to generosity and self-sacrificing participation in the life of society? The nation is the grouping next to family and clan and neighbourhood in the service of which we grow in moral stature.

All groups who share in this vision and discipline can become equal compatriots but none else. Traitors cannot be assimilated into the national fellowship until they change in spirit.

2. Toleration: Springing from understanding and sense of identity, this philosophy of immanence has produced the Indian doctrine of toleration of all points of view, religious views and ways of life. For all are expressions of the same cosmic spirit and can reach the same goal at their own pace and in their own way in accordance with their own symbols, provided they are sincere in their aspiration and effort. Errors will correct themselves in the climb.

Adhikara Bheda: Divergent status due to divergent qualification is the formula that reconciles identity of goal and diversity of pathway.

3. Social Order: Such a view has evolved the outline of social order in India that enables members to pass normally from step to step in the ladder of life smoothly using the experience of ages and lifting their personalities to higher planes.

The individual career is distinguished into *brahmacharya, garhasthya, vanaprastha and sannyasa*. In the first, we have the student absorbing the cultural heritage, assimilating truth, science, philosophy, law and the arts. In the second, we have him fulfilling his duties as a member of society and as head of his household. The householder pays taxes, supports the state and does charity. The second half of life prepares the individual to detach himself from involvement in the detail of existence to contemplate the eternal. The values of life including the relations of the sexes in family and outside offer a pattern that is of universal value. It helps to make the best of life, with enjoyment, achievement and serenity in perfect equipoise. This is the *ashrama dharma* whose

sociological value remains for fruitful assimilation today even in the West.

The social order has another aspect, namely the duties and rights of different vocational groups “ viz. *swadharmas*. In addition to universal values like truth-speaking, non-stealing, non-injury, etc., Indian ethics recognises particular vocations “ thinkers and men of worship i.e., free devotees of Truth and God or Nature or Reality; warriors and administrators, executives, etc.; traders and manufacturers and transporters, agriculturists and cattle tenders and breeders, etc. These classes emerge in the course of social differentiation in any progressive society. If their duties are laid down and social expectations are crystalised in society so that everyone will know what is expected of him “ his rights as well as duties “ a harmonious social order will result spontaneously. The present society will throw all careers open to talent on the basis of *swadharma* or duty springing from ones vocation and *karma* and *guna*, character and conduct.

No Class War: Another advantage of the Indian view of society is that it eschews class-war. It postulates social harmony as a potentiality, if not as a full actual order of law and custom, observances and enforcements.

Dharma as determinant of the conduct of groups and individuals lays down a synthesis of the claims of conflicting parties. A study of the conflict impartially from the standpoint of the service involved, the function performed in society by the conflicting parties, will reveal the elements of the truth and justice in each partys claims. Dharma will come to mean an expression and crystallisation of the synthesis of interests and values revealed by the panchayat. This is the source of the long-standing Indian faith in the panchayat way of setting disputes. It is democratic, scientific and moralistic at the same time. The destructive idea of class-war or irreconcilable antagonism between different

functions and classes is therefore, successfully avoided in the Indian scheme.

The use of the word dharma does not preclude the inclusion of different sects and religious fellowships who may use different words for the same meanings “ like the Muslim and Christian. The substance of the thought and procedure and value is non-sectarian and human in the plainest sense.

Thus, both from the standpoint of a philosophy of man and nature as well as from the viewpoint of social good, the Indian scheme is capable of affording a comprehensive social philosophy able to furnish a saving pattern for modern complex life “ a social philosophy superior to current violent and muddy theories of Marxism and Freudianism.

Indian thought too has sound notions of the role of the State as the agent of common good “ raja dharma which now may be designated rajya niti or rajya dharma The State should be above partial interests and should regulate all activities according to dharma. The State is not a class agent of the upper class, according to Indian shastras or political and social science. Nor it is an exploiting agency. It is an agent of morality or dharma. It precludes socialism in the sense of adding economic to political power. The State is not a trader or manufacturer but is entitled to regulate all vocations. Thus Indian ideas help us to think through current conflicts and social theories and arrive at solutions more satisfactory because more truly based on wide experience and mature reflection.

No doubt we may surpass the past but only by thinking through them to new conclusions, not by ignoring them and starting de novo.

Also, it is a waste of effort if we are to start from scratch when great ideas are to hand for the asking. It is like each scientist ignoring all previous discoveries and starting from scratch from a false notion of originality!

It is not national chauvinism but sober common sense to build on the foundations already well and truly laid.

The *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* is not merely a school for teaching ideas and ideals. It is a school for practical education in character-building. As already mentioned, the volunteers are trained in a series of camps in which through songs, participated life in common, discussions on history and national ideals and national heroes, drill and physical exercises etc., habits and motives for service of the motherland are built into character. The influence of example is fully made use of.

Day-to-day meetings of Swayamsevaks in Shakhas or branches, bigger gatherings on the occasions of national festivals and the celebration of the Days of heroes and lectures and demonstrations and other ways inculcate courage, discipline, sense of service to society, respect for elders and learned, etc. This is a unique system of training the young in the land in full consonance with the proved ideals and practice of Indian culture.

Not a whisper of hatred of any one is heard in the camp or routine activities of the volunteers. Only the positive image of the Mother country is made to occupy the entire mind and heart of the Swayamsevak.

The thoughts of the present Leader collected in these pages and presented in English can be appreciated as the adumbration of the Other Mind of Modern Indian Leadership neglected by the more prominent exotic Gandhian Congress Leadership. It will be seen how full, how positive, how patriotic, how practical and idealistic

at the same time, the principles and methods of nation-building adopted by the Sangh are. It will be seen that the Sangh is the indispensable basic corrective to all other current efforts to furnish the foundations of national reconstruction and inspiration for national regeneration on sound lines. It is not sectarian but national. And its nationalism gives room for all nationals who enter into the spirit of spiritual nationalism and patriotism in a life of social service of which defence is not the least ingredient. Readiness for service and even sacrifice is the chief motif of the movement.

Bangalore
28th April 1960
M. A. Venkata Rao

Shri Guruji: A Profile

Born in 1906 (Magh Bahul Ekadashi, Vishwavasu Samvat “ 19th February 1906) at Ramtek, near Nagpur, Maharashtra, Sri Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar, otherwise endearingly addressed as Guruji by one and all, was the only surviving son among the nine children of his parents, to whom he was their beloved Madhu. It seems, the destiny spared him, for it was he, who in later years as the second sar-sanghachalak of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh was to be the cynosure of the nation.

A prodigy that he was, he after having graduated from the Hislop college of Nagpur, joined the Hindu University of Varanasi for his Masters Degree in Science, during which period the benign and inspiring influence of Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya, the founder of the University and a reputed Hindu leader of yester “ years, prodded young Madhav Golwalkar to work for the Hindu cause. Later for a couple of years he served his Alma Mater as a professor and it was then that he earned from his students the affectionate sobriquet of Guruji, a reverential attribute which stuck to him permanently in the years that followed. He was initiated into Sangh, when he was still a professor, by Shri Prabhakar Balwant Dani, a student of his who in later years became the Sar-Karyavah (General Secretary) of the Sangh.

Guruji returned to Nagpur in 1933, to be with his parents, and there he came under the magnetic influence of Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar, the founder of Sangh, an event which metamorphosed him, just as it happened between Sri Ramakrishna and Narendra. Having decided to remain unmarried, he studied law and in fact, practised too for a year or two, while devoting most of his time and energy for Sangh activities.

But his inner urge was for spiritual persuit. He was intimately associated with Ramakrhishna Ashram earlier, and he kept alive

his association with that religious order while at Nagpur also. Having been overpowered by that strong impulse, he, to the utter surprise of all who knew him including his beloved parents, left for the Saragachi Ashram of Ramakrishna Math in the Himalayas, to be Sannyasi. He was there for a few months, after which he was initiated with Mantra Deeksha by Swami Akhandananda, a Gurubhai of Swami Vivekananda. But his was the nature not to be confined within the four walls of the Ashram and his Guru too, in his last days, bade him to serve the society at large from outside the Ashram.

Guruji returned to Nagpur from Saragachi in 1937, and then onwards, plunged himself, heart and soul into the Sangh work. Dr. Hedgewar bequeathed to him, the onus of Sar-Sanghachalakship on the eve of his demise on June 1940.

Guruji steered the organisation for 33 years (1940-1973) as its guide and philosopher. He, with his tireless travel all round the year, visited each and every province at least twice annually " thus for not less than sixty times across the length and breadth of Bharat. This is indeed a unique record. Guruji electrified the work to grow rapidly even in far " off places in Assam and Kerala. With his great erudition, he cogently propounded the historical and sociological background and the logicality of the concept of Hindu Rashtra, which, when he assumed responsibility as helmsman of the movement for Hindu resurgence represented by RSS, was just an empirical thought. He thus, widened the ideological base of the Sangh making it intelligible to a lay villager and the urban intellectual alike, with his uncompromising stress on the one-hour Shakha technique. Through word and deed, he perfected the Sangh methodology also, in every minute detail, thus making it through inculcation of proper samskars, an ideal Man-making instrument.

Because of his inspiring personality at the helm, apart from the shakha network, which spread far and wide, a number of affiliates like Vidyarthi Parishad, Bharateeya Mazdoor Sagh, Vishwa Hindu Parishad, and Bharateeya Vanavasi Kalyan Ashram, to name just a few, also began to sprout forth one after another, as more and more co-workers, imbued with Sangh ideology and organisational skill, began to translate them in respective fields of their interest. To all these, Guruji was the source-figure and a guide.

Because of his intimate contact alike with common people and the elite all over Bharat, he always had his finger on the pulse-beat of the nation; and as such many a time he had premonition of the coming events about which he used to forewarn the society and the rulers. In early fifties, when the government appointed a three-man commission, in pursuance of its earlier commitment for the reorganisation of states on linguistic basis, Gurujis was the lone voice for having a unitary form of government, which alone, he felt, could strengthen the integrity of the then nascent republic. After many years the realisation has now dawned that the experiment, after all, was disastrous. With regard to turmoil in the North-East states, about the same time, he warned the powers-that-be, about the nefarious activities of Christian missionaries, with an advice to deal with them with an iron hand; but the advice fell on deaf ears, due to which the country is now paying a very heavy price. In the mid-fifties, when our political masters were toying with Hindi Chini Bhai Bhai euphoria, Guruji was forthright in advising them publicly, not to be befooled by the hollow rhetoric, but to fortify our borders. He could clearly foresee and in fact, he forewarned also, about the evil designs of China, to attack us unawares from across the borders. The later events bear testimony to his warning. Again, prior to general census of 1960, when the Punjab problem was till smouldering, he was the first to advise that Punjabi language with Gurmukhi script be owned by all people in Punjab as their mother-tongue

and also that all Sikhs should register themselves as Hindus. Had that advice been heeded, Punjab would perhaps not have become the cauldron it turned out to be.

Thus, with his uncompromising commitment to the good of the nation, he built a massive organisation on the same lines. As Sar-Sanghachalak he served the motherland for thirty-three years, at the end of which he passed on the stewardship to the shoulders of Shri Balasaheb Deoras (Madhukar Dattatreya Deoras)

Guruji breathed his last on 5th June 1973.

PART ONE

THE MISSION



1. Our World Mission

Many people in our country hold the view that any venture that we undertake should be based on a grand world-thought capable of rendering good to the whole of humanity eschewing all narrow limitations of the country, community or religion. In support of this view, some proclaim that in this age of missiles and rockets distance has vanished, boundaries of countries have become meaningless and the whole world has shrunk. They, therefore, feel that the very concept of country, nation, etc., has become outdated, that the spirit of world unity alone should inspire all our activities. They conclude that the modern isms which have taken up internationalism as their watchword can alone lead us to that cherished goal.

Now, the question that naturally poses itself before us is how far is the task of reorganising the national life of Hindus taken by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, in conformity with the spirit of world unity and human good?

The First in the Field

At the very outset, let it be made clear that it is not the modern thinkers who are the first in the field to think in terms of world unity and universal welfare. Long long ago, in fact, long before the so-called modern age had set in, the seers and savants of this land had delved deep into this vital question. The ideal of human unity, of a world free from all traces of conflict and misery, has stirred our hearts since times immemorial. Our one constant prayer all through the ages has been :

Sarvepi sukhinah santu. Sarve santu niramayah.

(Let everyone be happy, let everyone be free from all ills) While the present-day West has not been able to go beyond the motto of the greatest good of the greatest number, we have never tolerated the idea of a single human being " why, of even a single living organism " being miserable. Total good of all beings has always been our glorious ideal.

The Two Sides

But coming to the plane of the present-day world, we are faced with the hard reality of the all-round discord and disruption ravaging human society. Today, humanity is divided and subdivided into so many small exclusive groups called nations or states, each one of them devoted to its own narrow self-interest. And it is a matter of common experience that wherever there are groups inspired only by self-interest, there is bound to be mutual conflict. Obviously, human unity and welfare is impossible so long as this type of conflict continues. The present state of strifes and wars resulting in human destruction and misery has led many thinkers to conclude that the sentiment of nationalism which nourishes exclusive self-interest is the major obstacle in the way of world unity and human welfare. They, therefore, declare that nationalism should be rooted out from the minds of men all over the world. The Communist ideology which claims internationalism as its sheet-anchor often talks in this strain.

On the other hand, there is another school of thought, which holds that the roots of nationalism are so deep and long-standing that it is impossible to destroy them. Soviet Russia, which sought to discard nationalism in a bid to take to international communism soon learnt by experience that destruction of this sentiment deprives the people of the incentive for dedicated effort. In the first flush of revolution, material progress was no doubt achieved in Russia in a certain measure. Their first few Seven Year Plans were to an extent successful. But, by and by, the enthusiasm of

the people began to wane, their incentive for work began to die away. Eventually, labour in big factories had to be forced to work at the point of bayonet. And again during the Second World War, when Hitlers tanks were relentlessly pressing forward on the Russian soil, the slogan of Internationalism and Communism failed to enthuse the Russian people. This served as an eye-opener to the Russian leaders who found it absolutely essential to rouse the dormant patriotic sentiments of the Russian people by invoking their age-old loyalty to motherland and their heroic ancestors. It is evident, therefore, that it is devotion to ones motherland, society and tradition experienced under the concept of nation that inspires the spirit of real service and sacrifice in the individual.

The Abortive Experiments

We can thus conclude that nationalism cannot and should not be destroyed. Then the problem boils down to one of achieving a synthesis of national aspirations and world welfare. Synthesis of various kinds have been, in fact, attempted from time to time in the past. Imperialism has sometimes been claimed to be one such large-scale effort to eliminate conflicts between smaller nations by making them limbs of a single empire. But as it was basically motivated by self-aggrandizement, leading to revolts by the subject nations against their oppression and exploitation, imperialism failed to eliminate international conflicts.

The League of Nations, formed after the First World War, was also an experiment in avoiding wars and achieving world unity. But within just two decades of its birth, the League of Nations was shattered to pieces on the rock of unbridled national ambitions and consequent conflicts. A more terrible war than all the previous ones besmirched the face of the earth with death and destruction. The UNO too, formed after the Second World War, is faring no better. Our own experience in the case of Kashmir issue

tells us that it is incapable of meting out justice, of pulling up the erring members and bringing about an honourable amity among nations. It has been converted into an arena for international conflicts, the powerful nations trying to dominate its forum to further their expansionistic ends. The world is overcast with the dark clouds of a third world war which may, at any time, mean the sudden and total end of the present civilisation itself.

We thus see that nations are not prepared to come together in a spirit of amity for the welfare of mankind. On the contrary, the national entities are getting more and more exclusive and their ambitions whetted day by day. Newer nations are also coming up on the world stage. The entire face of the world is covered with conflicts between nations.

In short, nationalism cannot be destroyed; all attempts to harmonise the national ambitions so far have also utterly failed; and the world is on the brink of a nuclear holocaust. Then, which way lies the salvation for humanity? No answer to this challenge seems to be forthcoming. Thinkers, the world over, are on the horns of a dilemma.

The Inner Bond of Harmony

However, we Hindus have a solution to offer. But our solution is not based on materialism. All the attempts and experiments made so far were based on theories or isms stemming from materialism. And materialism has no answer to the very salient and fundamental question "Why at all should people aspire for world unity and human welfare? Why should they at all feel pained at the sight of man set against man? Why should we at all love each other?" From the materialist point of view we are all gross entities, each separate and exclusive in itself, who can have no bonds of mutual affinity or affection. There can also be no inner restraint in such beings, which can make them control their

selfishness from running amuck, in the interest of the humanity as a whole.

After all, any arrangement evolved for achieving world welfare can be fruitful only to the extent the men behind it are inspired by real love for mankind which will enable them to mould their individual and national conduct in tune with the welfare of humanity. Without that supreme urge, any scheme, however good its purpose may be, will only provide one more alluring mask for the aggrandizement of power-drunk nations. That has been the uniform verdict of history right up to the present times.

Our ancient Hindu philosophers, therefore, had turned their gaze to a plane higher than materialism. They delved deep into the mysteries of the human soul, well beyond the reach of material science, and discovered the Ultimate Reality, which pervades all Creation, the one great common principle present in all beings, whatever the name we may give it-Soul, God, Truth, Reality or Nothingness. It is the occasional realisation of this common entity, that inspires us to strive for the happiness of others. The I in me, being the same as the I in the other beings, makes me react to the joys and sorrows of my fellow living beings just as I react to my own. This genuine feeling of identity born out of the community of the inner entity is the real driving force behind our natural urge for human unity and brotherhood. Thus it is evident, that world unity and human welfare can be made real, only to the extent mankind realises this common Inner Bond, which alone can subdue the passions and discords stemming from materialism, broaden the horizon of the human mind and harmonise the individual and national aspirations with the welfare of mankind.

The Right Way

Now, we come to the second question. How will that One Common Substratum manifest itself in the complicated organism

of human society? Will it result in eliminating all distinctive features of nations and roll them all into one uniform pattern ? Or will it make the various groups of people come together in a spirit of comradeship realising the innate oneness of mankind while preserving their individual nationalities?

Here again, our philosophers have unmistakably pointed out the path of real human happiness. Just as an individual, a nation " an aggregate of individuals " too has an individuality all its own. Individuals and nations in all parts of the globe have distinctive traits and features, each of them having its own place in the scheme of the universe. The different human groups are marching forward, all towards the same goal, each in its own way and in keeping with its own characteristic genius. The destruction of the special characteristics, whether of an individual, or of a group, will therefore not only destroy the natural beauty of harmony but also its joy of self-expression. Evolution of human life also, which is a multifaced one, is retarded thereby.

For, it is a matter of common experience that it is only by developing ones unique characteristic that man rises to his full stature and enjoys bliss and happiness. So, to seek harmony among the various characteristics has been our special contribution to the world thought. The oft-quoted feature of our racial genius, that is, of recognising unity amidst diversity, stems from this deep appreciation of the principles that water the roots of human unity, human happiness and evolution. Thus, in short, we stand for a harmonious synthesis among nations and not their obliteration. Needless to say, the idea of creating a stateless condition of levelling all human beings to one particular plane of physical existence, erasing their individual and group traits, is foreign to us. The World State of our concept will, therefore, evolve out of a federation of autonomous and self-constrained nations under a common centre linking them all.

The Sacred Trust

It is clear, therefore, that the mission of reorganising the Hindu people on the lines of their unique national genius which the Sangh has taken up is not only a great process of true national regeneration of Bharat but also the inevitable precondition to realise the dream of world unity and human welfare. For, as we have seen, it is the grand world-unifying thought of Hindus alone that can supply the abiding basis for human brotherhood, that knowledge of the Inner Spirit which will charge the human mind with sublime urge to toil for the happiness of mankind, while opening out full and free scope for every small life-speciality on the face of the earth to grow to its full stature.

This knowledge is in the custody of Hindus alone. It is a divine trust, we may say, given to the charge of the Hindus by Destiny. And when a person possesses a treasure, a duty is laid upon him to safeguard it and make it available for the welfare of others. If he fails in that supreme duty he ruins not only himself but also others. Hence the sacred duty of preserving the Hindu Society in sound condition has devolved upon us.

How can we say that it is the Hindu Society alone that can fulfil this grand world mission and none else? This may at first sight appear to be rather too proud a claim. Nevertheless it is a bare statement of fact, which we can readily appreciate when we observe the historical processes at work in our land as well as in other countries. History has recorded that it is in this land alone that, right from the hoary times, generation after generation of thinkers and philosophers, seers and sages rose to unravel the mysteries of human nature, dived deep into the world of Spirit and discovered and perfected the science of realisation of the Great Unifying Principle. The penance and sacrifice and experience of hundreds of centuries of a whole nation is there as

the inexhaustible fountainhead of his knowledge to assuage the spiritual thirst of the world.

The outside world, on the other hand, did not take to the study of this science of Spirit. Even to this day, they have remained extroverts habituated to studying the outer world through their senses. The senses too go outward and as such they cannot lead to the vision of the inward nature. The Westerners, therefore, have remained ignorant of the knowledge and experience of the world of Spirit however much they might have unravelled the mysteries of the world of matter. Our ancestors who, on the other hand, crossed to realm beyond the senses could see within and have glimpse of that glorious Inner Reality.

Success in Practice

Further, it was not mere dry knowledge confined to the intellectual speculations of a few thinkers sitting in their forest hermitages. It was a living thought driving our ancestors “ thinkers, administrators, merchants, scientists, artists and philosophers “ to reach distant lands carrying that message of world brotherhood. Wherever they stepped, they taught the local people the spiritual and cultural values of life, taught them the sciences of material prosperity as well and built up a homogeneous brotherhood of nations under their benign wings. Our Hindu Society, strong, self-confident and self-effulgent, acted as the fulcrum of that far-flung empire of the Spirit.

Our arms stretched as far as America on the one side “ that was long long before Columbus discovered America ! “ and on the other side to China, Japan, Cambodia, Malaya, Siam, Indonesia and all the South-East Asian countries and right up to Mongolia and Siberia in the North. Our powerful political empire too spread over these South-East areas and continued for 1,400 years, the

Shailendra Empire alone flourishing for over 700 years “ standing as a powerful bulwark against Chinese expansion.

During all these centuries, there were neither uprisings by the local people nor their exterminations which would have been the inevitable result if there had been the slightest sign of domination or exploitation by a foreign people and a foreign culture. On the contrary, those people were grateful to us. They adored our nation and longed to give up their mortal coils on the banks of Ganga. That stands in glowing contrast to the bloodstained pages of the history of expansion of Islam, Christianity and now Communism and of the various world conquerors produced by other countries. Even to this day, the basic life-pattern of many of those people is Hindu. They bear Hindu names. We find so many Hindu faces all over there, proud of their Hindu heritage, even though many of them are now Muslims by religion.

Our society which has given rise to such great souls down their centuries “each one of them a lustrous star on the horizon of world thought “ is still throwing up a host of luminaries right upto the present-day such as Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, who could identify himself not merely with the joys and sorrows of human beings but with all animate and inanimate objects as well ! When he saw a cow thrashed with a whip, he shrieked with pain and red stripes were found on his back! On another occasion, a bullock grazing on a meadow left a bruised imprint of its hoof on his chest. Such is the extent of identification that our great teachers of the science of Spirit have attained and preached.

The First Step

However, today, such a glorious heritage is being condemned and brushed aside by its own children. It has become a fashion these days to deride our ancient ideals and traditions and talk of recasting our society in the mould of the modern isms. But such

attempts at supplanting our life-pattern by another, paying no heed to the natural blossoming of our innate character, can only result in degeneration. Already we are witnessing the signs of its dreadful effect on our society. Disorganised and diffident, our society has become an easy prey to all predatory forces prowling about under the garb of various isms and religions. How can a society given to self-derision, weakened by all-round disruption and dissipation, kicked and humiliated at every point by any and every bully in the world, teach the world ? How can one, devoid of the urge or the capacity to ennoble ones own life, show the path of greatness to others?

It is inevitable, therefore, that in order to be able to contribute our unique knowledge to mankind, in order to be able to live and strive for the unity and welfare of the world, we stand before the world as a self-confident, resurgent and mighty nation. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh has resolved to fulfil this age-old national mission by forging, as the first step, the present-day scattered elements of the Hindu Society into an organised and invincible force both on the plane of the Spirit and on the plane of material life. Verily this is the one real practical world mission “ if ever there was one.

2. Final Refuge for Mankind

There are some nations in the world, which pride themselves on being "progressive modern societies." It would be instructive to examine how far the dominant note of their life “ which is the pursuit of material happiness “ is conducive to the real progress and happiness of man.

The first aspect of this pursuit of pleasure is the process of never ending competition. Each one competes with the other in amassing objects of enjoyment. The second aspect is what is nowadays described as the "permissive society".

Way to Social Suicide

We shall start with the second aspect. In simple words, "permissiveness" means, the individual is left free to indulge in whatever way he chooses to enjoy himself. There is no restraint of any kind on him. It is unbridled licentious behaviour with respect to sex, food, drinks, family life, social intercourse and all such aspects. This is also reflected in their talk, writing and thinking as well. Will this type of "permissiveness" be conducive to the real happiness of man?

The first and foremost effect of this trend would be the destruction of social fabric. The social contract theory on which the Western societies are based cannot stem this tide, because the theory is essentially one of mutual understanding between the individual and the society to protect each others interests. But when the individual begins to assert that it is after all a contract between individuals, that basis of social integrity itself falls to the ground. The entity called the "society" will then disrupt and dissipate. And it requires not much of intelligence to guess what

kind of fate awaits the pursuit of happiness by the individual where the society has disintegrated.

It is only when the society is looked upon as a living corporate body of which the individual is a limb that the real unifying social consciousness will be ingrained in him. Then alone will he be able to restrain his erratic impulses and harmonise them with the interests of the society. And this is exactly what the Hindu philosophy propounds.

Giving Rise to Unhealthy Urge

The other element of the modern society is "competition". It is claimed that healthy competition is necessary for progress. But it is a matter of common experience that competition will not remain healthy for long. By its very nature it cannot remain healthy. Very soon, it degenerates. Competition, which implies bettering ones performance over the other, soon gives place to the urge to become better by pulling down the other. These days, such a trend is becoming more and more pronounced even in sports. After all, sports is played for pure joy and for increasing ones skill and efficiency. It should not matter much, who wins or loses. But we find that even there the atmosphere has no more remained cordial. The craze for winning by any means, fair or foul, and unwholesome rivalry are beginning to vitiate that field. If this could happen in the case of sports, then what to speak of other fields where material interests are directly involved! Now, what is all this competition intended for? It is, according to them, to "raise the standard of living".

Vicious Race

Since, their concept of happiness centres entirely round the satisfaction of the desires of senses, the term raising the standards of living" has only come to mean more and more amassing of the

objects of physical enjoyment, which becomes the major preoccupation of the individual to the exclusion of all other thoughts and aspirations. In order to procure the objects of physical pleasures, accumulation of wealth follows. To achieve more and more wealth, power becomes necessary. But the insatiable hunger for physical enjoyment does not allow one to stop within ones own national boundaries. On the strength of its state power, the stronger nation tries to subdue and exploit the other in order to swell its own coffers. This leads to conflicts and conflagrations. And once this process starts there is no end to it. Moral bonds are all snapped. Normal human emotions are dried up. The values and virtues, which ought to distinguish man from the rest of animal kingdom, vanish. And it is this process of degeneration of man that is clothed in attractive terms such as competition and raising the standard of human living.

Let Examples Speak

The instance of how the American nation came into being is a lurid reminder of this inhuman state of affairs. Various peoples from Europe sailed forth to that continent in search of material wealth and happiness and began to establish their settlements. In the process, they annihilated the original inhabitants of that land. The barbaric atrocities and the savage genocide indulged in by the so called civilized Whites makes hair-raising reading. The original Red Indians who have managed to exist till today in certain areas have remained there as but show-piece specimens. Nor is America a solitary instance. Wherever the Western White had gone, whether Australia, America or Southern America, they have left behind the same trail of death and destruction. Even recently, we have heard of similar horrors perpetrated against the natives by the Whites in South America.

The same is the case with the Communist dictatorships " Russia and China. There also, the one end and aim of all their plans is to

"raise the standard of living", though clothed in a different terminology. As a result, the same process is at work: amassing of objects of physical enjoyment; to achieve this, resorting to accumulation of more and more wealth; and to achieve that, greater aggrandizement of power followed by invasion and exploitation of weaker nations, conflicts, genocide and resultant de-humanising effects.

If one were to dispassionately observe the characteristics of the present-day so-called civilized modern societies, they appear to tally, almost word to word, with the attributes of the asuras as detailed in Bhagawad-Gita !

And thus we find that the two prominent features of the modem Western society, i.e. "permissiveness" and "competition", have led human society away from peace and happiness.

We shall now go a bit deeper into the problem in order to find out the basic cause for this failure.

The “Modern” Predicament

The basic impulse of all living beings, as all know is to seek happiness. So also, man. He desires to be happy “ not for a day or two but continuously all through his life. And it is through the senses that man, like other living beings, tries to seek that happiness. To start with, there are the bodily and mental needs and appetites. The fulfillment of these hungers gives him a sense of happiness. There is no denying the fact that such fulfillment gives man happiness for some time. But it is also equally true that it is fleeting, temporary. Experience teaches him that the more he tries to enjoy the pleasures of the flesh the more acute becomes the hunger. He never feels satisfied. Greater the attempts for satisfaction of desires, greater will be the dissatisfaction. As such, greater the amassing of objects of enjoyment greater is the

disappointment; greater the indulgence, greater is the disenchantment. Our Shastras have declared, "*Na jatu Kamah Kamanamupabhogena shamyati*" the desires are not quenched by enjoyment of sense. Even after the body becomes old and dilapidated, desires continue to be young : *Trishna na jeerna vayameva jeernah.* This is exactly the predicament in which the modern man is finding himself.

Source is Within

The Hindu philosophy steps in here to offer a cogent solution. It says, the real source of happiness lies within oneself and not without. Even a little introspection will bear this out. Take the instance of a man who is absorbed in enjoyment of music. Just then if he receives a wire conveying the death of a near and dear one, he immediately loses all interest in the music and goes away. If really music had the inherent power to give happiness, then it should have made the man overcome his sorrow and made him continue to listen to music. But the very opposite was the effect. Music, which was a source of enjoyment till a moment before had now become a point of repulsion to him.

It only means that the external objects which, appear to give us happiness serve only as pretexts or instruments whereas its real source is within. But still we go after the external objects only because of delusion. It is like a dog, which begins to bite and chew dry bone. After a time, the bone pieces cut into its mouth. Blood oozes out. The dog tastes that blood and feels elated. That is how the external objects seem to give us happiness! It is obvious that such enjoyments will, after a while, stop giving us pleasure and land us in sorrow and disappointment.

Secret of Bliss

How then should one get at the source of happiness within oneself? A little reflection will show that even the object of enjoyment will entirely go out of the mind during that particular moment when one is supposed to be enjoying that object. It only means that we experience the happiness, which is inherent in us and not anything flowing out of that external object. Then the obvious conclusion would be that in order to be eternally and continuously happy, we should be able to reach that state where we can be happy without the aid of any external object.

Then what is the process for reaching that state?

It is a matter of common experience that a restless mind can never be happy. It is only when the mind is calm and peaceful that man enjoys happiness. To achieve such a quiet and tranquil state of mind it is necessary to see that the various types of desires do not raise their heads in the mind. When the water is disturbed with ripples one cannot see what is at the bottom. Nor can we see our reflection in it. When the ripples calm down and the water becomes still everything becomes clear. So also, when the mind becomes quiet one becomes aware of the reality in the depths of human mind. So long as the mind is restless that awareness is lost. And so happiness, which stems from the awareness of that reality is also lost. It only means that if the mental waves could be quietened, then one could enjoy happiness even without the aid of any external object of enjoyment.

The Supreme Goal

When man realises this truth " that real happiness does not reside in external objects but in himself " then will he turn his gaze inside. The pulls of those objects will then gradually wear off. And when he completely frees himself from the attachment of the

external objects he will attain the supreme state of liberation. Such a man will not run about seeking enjoyment in the outside world. He has no cravings of the physical desires which would render him restless, he is supremely contented, tranquil and at peace with himself, having found the fountainhead of true and everlasting joy and bliss within himself. And that happiness would be constant and unbounded in comparison with which the pleasure derived from the external objects would pale into insignificance. That is the highest state to which man has to aspire and ultimately reach “ the state of *Mukti* or *Moksha*.

Why the Failure

When examined on the touchstone of this basic philosophy of supreme happiness, can the so-called progressive societies with their cut-throat competition, jealousy, hatred and violence be ever expected to give rise to human happiness? Is such a state of affairs conducive to making the human mind quiet and tranquil? In fact, the opposite is the case. Everything is calculated to incite more and more desires. The flames of desire are fed more and more. And so long as desires are unfulfilled mind is restless. It always hankers after the objects of senses. How then can such a mind become quiet and peaceful?

The Yoga Way

In Bharat, all our training is directed towards the single object of achieving mental peace. Patanjali in his Yoga-Sutras has advised that when one sees others are endowed with prosperity and happiness and virtuous and meritorious one is advised not to be jealous but to be happy and congratulate them. One is advised to achieve progress by ones efforts but one should not indulge in competition or jealousy. One has to be circumspect and discriminative in deciding how much and in what fashion one has to amass and enjoy the external objects of enjoyment. Otherwise,

it results in oneself trying to become happy even at the cost of others happiness. And this will disturb ones mental balance thus destroying ones own happiness. So also, Patanjali advises that when we see another man sinful and in distress, our natural reaction should be one of compassion. We should strive to the best of our capacity to alleviate the others suffering. Such an attitude on our part will bring peace and tranquility to our mind resulting in inner happiness to ourselves.

"Permissiveness" to Suffer !

The next feature of the modern civilization, "permissiveness" is the very opposite of peace and tranquility. Our ancient scriptures describe a time when there were no rules or codes of social conduct. But soon it bred enmity and conflict between man and man and led to anarchy and immorality all-round. That resulted in uncertainty, anxiety, fear, jealousy, hatred and all such propensities, which destroy the mental tranquility. Hence rules of behaviour were framed which would help avoiding such mental disturbances and restore mental balance and peace.

After all, the modern societies have come to the fore during last one or two centuries. It is not safe to come to conclusion regarding the essential aspects of human life on the strength of such limited experience, carried away by the dazzling appearance of their physical prosperity and scientific and technological achievements. It is only on the touchstone of long and enduring experience that one has to judge and decide the right kind of life-attitudes which lead to the real happiness of man.

Harmony of Both

The experience of millennia of our national life in this country says that the craze for unlimited sensual enjoyment and competitive rage to satiate the same would never lead to

happiness. It has taught us to cultivate self-restraint “ a requisite as much necessary to the preservation of social fabric as to the development of the individuals. In order to instil the spirit of self-restraint the concept of Chaturvidha Purusharta was propounded. This four-fold goal of life “ Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha “ helps one to lead a self-restrained, balanced and harmonious way of life. And that arrangement envisages duties and obligations for the individual on both the planes “ personal and social. Rules of behaviour “ Dharma “ conducive to achieving the supreme happiness of man will guide and control all the material aspects of life “ Artha (politics and economics) and Kama (fulfilment of physical desires)

Two Bounds of River of Life

The soul and spirit of all these rules of conduct would be the supreme urge to finally attain the real state of our being, i.e. Moksha or whatever name is given to this fourth Purushartha. It is thus that all our physical propensities and enjoyments are held between Dharma on the one hand and Moksha on the other. Just as the river flowing within the bounds on either side will be beneficial, but becomes destructive when it breaks its bounds, so also is the case with the stream of human life. It is only when it flows between the two bounds of Dharma and Moksha that it will be conducive to the happiness of both the individual and the society. Whatever is permissible within these two bounds could be enjoyed by one and all. It is only this arrangement that can strike a balance between enjoyment and peace of mind and ultimately lead one to the state of highest bliss.

The mission of Hindu consolidation that the RSS has taken up is inspired by this vision of unlocking the door of supreme happiness for entire mankind. And as days go by, we are confident, the so-called progressive modern societies are also

bound to take refuge in this ancient yet living wisdom of this holy land. As the Samskrit saying goes,

Tavad garjanti sastrani jambuka vipine yatha

Na garjati mahateja yavad vedantakesarih”

("*The jackals of other theories will be howling only so long as the Lion of Vedanta does not give out the great and all-powerful roar !*")

3. Challenge of the Times

After the British have left our country we are faced with the problem of deciding the right pattern for our future national reconstruction. There are two major patterns of social set-up which are in vogue in the modern world.

Fate of First Reaction

One, the older of the two, is called Democracy. It originated as a reaction to the unbridled monarchy in the countries of Europe. The individual was then a mere serf, devoid of all initiative and freedom, just a toy in the hands of the divine kings. People rose in revolt, overthrew the divine right of kingship and smashed the power of monarchy for all time. The inspiring slogan of liberty, equality and fraternity was on the lips of everybody. It was loudly trumpeted from housetops that the long dark night of slavery and tyranny had finally ended and a new era of individual freedom, sanctity of the individual rights and equality of opportunity for all had dawned.

But, by about the same time, the age of machine also had set in. Industries had begun to flourish. Science and technology had begun helping industrialists to set up bigger and bigger plants. Millions of labourers were employed in those engines of mass production. Under the slogan of equality of opportunity persons with greater intelligence and wealth monopolised all those new avenues of production of wealth and became the unchallenged financial overlords. On the strength of their overwhelming power of money they even captured the political machinery. And the common people were left high and dry, except for a solitary political right to vote, which too they were not free to use under the oppressive economic conditions.

Thus the high-sounding concept of individual freedom only meant the freedom of those talented few to exploit the rest of the common people and reduce them to abject serfdom. The horrible conditions of the labourers -men, women and even children " working in those factories defied all description. They were now groaning under the heels of the new tyrants in place of the old.

Tragedy of Second Reaction

It was at this stage that Communism came up as a reaction against the new tyranny of Capitalism. Communism started with the assumption that industrial revolution was bound to result in dire economic disparity, giving rise to two classes, the haves(Capitalists) and the have-nots (Proletariat, i.e., working class). There would, therefore, ensue a class conflict in which, they again assumed, the proletariat would come out victorious. After that, there would be an end to the misery of the masses as the state, run by the working class, would take over the entire burden of looking after the material needs of the people by controlling all means of production and distribution of wealth. Thus, it was prophesied that greater the industrialisation of a country, greater the economic disparity and therefore, greater the class conflict and sooner the ushering in of the rule of the proletariat.

But this prophecy " which was the climax of its materialistic interpretation of history " was completely belied by the future course of history. Out of all countries it was in Russia, industrially a most backward country, that Communist revolution registered its first success. Even to this day countries like America, England and Germany which are in the forefront of industrial progress " in fact where the industrial revolution first took shape " have not shown any signs of advancing towards Communism. On the contrary, it was China, another industrially backward country, which has become Communist in recent years.

Thus the claim of historical inevitability of Communism based on its materialistic interpretation of human history has been shattered on the rock of hard realities.

Secondly, what is the condition of the common mass of people in that promised land of freedom, peace and plenty? It is all too well known that the dictatorship of the proletariat has been reduced to the dictatorship of the dictator of the dictatorial party, i.e. the Communist in these countries. Mass liquidations, slave camps, communes, forced labour, brainwashing and all such inhuman engines of dictatorship have reduced the individual to such low depths of misery and slavery as was unheard of even under the unbridled kingship or during the worst days of Capitalism. That is how their call of you have nothing to lose but your chains to the masses has resulted in practice!

The Promise and the Performance

Have they, at least, succeeded in their goal of satisfying the primary material needs of their people, which was their first promise to them? Take the example of Russia, the first great country, which made the experiment in a thorough-going manner. They liquidated all private property, all the industrialists, and took over all industries in their own hands. On the agricultural front, they liquidated all the landlords and the peasants, grouped them into communes and collective farms. So, it was from all aspects a thorough going experiment. Naturally we ought to expect a tremendous growth in the prosperity of Russia during the past fifty years.

Some say, "Look, they have been able to send a rocket to the moon". But so far as the masses, in whose name they speak, are concerned, going to the moon is not their main problem. Belly is their major problem. It was, in fact, the main pivot of the Communist revolution. Have the Russian Government been able

to give two square meals to the residents of their country? That is the first question. As a matter of fact the success of any government or any particular theory of government is to be measured in terms of its capacity to give every citizen two square meals, a place to rest in, sufficient clothing, treatment in case of illness, and education. That is the acid test.

Has Russia answered this test? Russia has an extensive territory. At one time, it was the biggest wheat-producing country in the world. In proportion, the population is small and so a smaller number of mouths to feed. They have all the modern implements of agriculture. Added to that are the colossal resources of the all-powerful State at the back of each and every plan. In spite of all these, in order to feed the resident citizens of Russia, the Russian Government has to actually import wheat and other edibles from Canada, from USA and other countries. A more convincing proof of the utter defeat of Communism need not be called for now!

The Grand Retreat of Both

Faced with such tragic consequences, the Communist countries, too, are having second thoughts about their system of absolute governmentalisation. They have begun to realise that the destruction of individual freedom kills the creative urge and incentive for work in the individual. They are, therefore, gradually moving towards individual freedom. They are being compelled, as in some East European countries and even in Russia, to allow the individual to own a few things and a little freedom to enjoy his property.

Chester Bowles of America has stated: "Russia is now allowing, what are called, kitchen farms to be personally cultivated by farmers to the tune of 34% of the total land they cultivate. But the production from these 34% personal holdings (which do not have the benefit of heavy farm-machinery which is all monopolised by

the State) has been 60% of the total produce, whereas 66% of the State-owned farms has yielded but 40%." That has once again proved that the promise of total governmentalisation, i.e., absolute collectivism, with which they started, is beating a hasty retreat in the land of its own birth.

On the other hand, those countries where Democracy was born with the promise of absolute individualism have also gone back upon their original stand. Having seen the tragic results of the unrestrained equality of opportunity and of freedom of the individual, they were forced to undertake drastic measures to curtail in practice those theoretical concepts in the interest of the common social good. In fact, that is how they were able to avoid revolution and maintain their democratic structure.

We thus find that both the above theories, Democracy and Communism, have two things in common, i.e., both were born as reactions to the previous order and both have had to resile from their original stand and forced to move towards each other “ Democracy from its individualism towards collectivism and Communism from its collectivism towards individualism. In respect of both their birth and growth there is a remarkable similarity though, of course, their starting points were diametrical opposites because of historical reasons.

Stemming from the Same Root

This need not cause any surprise to us, for if we go deeper and get at their roots we find that both of them stem from a common concept of the goal of human life. According to the Western thought “ from which both the concepts of Democracy and Communism took birth “ the life of man for all practical purposes is limited to the physical plane. And the human being is just a bundle of physical wants. Accordingly, production and distribution of material objects, which were believed to satisfy the

material appetites of man became the one all-consuming passion of all their theories. Further, equality of man was propounded on the material plane because all men were equally in need of all these basic material needs.

As the individual was only a physical entity goaded entirely by those physical desires, there was no reason for him to look upon society as anything more then an instrument to serve his needs. But a society made up of such individuals exclusively dedicated to their own selfish interests could not be expected to endure even for a day. Society, for its sustenance, demands a spirit of sacrifice on the part of its constituents. And without society, individuals also cannot carry on their physical existence. So a sort of compromise, a contract, had to be worked out between the conflicting interests of the individual and the society.

This contract theory is thus the result of the concept of an inherent conflict between the individual and the society. It is this basic conflict that expressed itself in the form of Capitalism on the one hand and Communism on the other, i.e., on the one hand, the individual becoming the enemy of society and on the other, the society becoming the enemy of the individual. And as we have seen, both the systems are now trying to mitigate the evils that have flowed from the common materialistic concept of human goal.

Materialism Fails

But to identify man with a mere bundle of material desires is to equate him with an animal. If man is just an animal, why should he lead an amicable and ordered life? All that can be said is that human beings do not prey upon one another like animals, simply because if X wants to devour Y, some Z will try to devour X. Thus, to prevent themselves from being mutually destroyed, some sort of arrangement had to be arrived at. But it cannot

explain why the will to sacrifice for others, the spirit of comradeship in misery, should at all rise in the mind of man. But all through the history of mankind we come across such persons who have sacrificed their lives for others willingly, lovingly and smilingly. There is the story of Dadhichi in our ancient literature who volunteered to offer his bones to be made into a weapon to destroy the demon Vrittasura. He was a seer living in the forest. As an individual he desired nothing. Then, what made him to sacrifice himself?

Let us take an instance of this twentieth century. Once in Calcutta, two little children playing on the roadside fell into an open manhole. A gentleman who was hurrying to his office, happened to see the children suddenly disappearing in the manhole. Without even waiting to take off his coat he jumped into the manhole, caught hold of the children who were being washed away in the current and pushed them outside. But he himself was caught in the mud and died. Why did he die? What is it that told him, "Go, that is your direction?" Materialism does not explain.

The Real Basis

There is only one explanation. And that is, there is one common Living Reality in all of us which furnishes the common inner bond. Our philosophy call it Atma. We love and serve one another not because of the external relations, but because of the community of that Atma. Yajnavalkya tells Maitreyi:

“Na va are Maitreyi patyuh kamaya patih priyo bhavati

Atmanastu kamaya patih priyo bhavati”

(*O Maitrey! Man is not loved (by wife) because he is the husband, but because of the Atma in him*) It is in this sense, i.e,, the same

spirit being immanent in all, that all men are equal. Equality is applicable only on the plane of the Supreme Spirit. But on the physical plane the same Spirit manifests itself in a wondrous variety of diversities and disparities.

According to our philosophy, the very projection of the Universe is due to a disturbance in the equilibrium of its three attributes " sattva, rajas and tamas " and if there is a gunasamya, perfect balance of the three attributes, then the Universe will dissolve back to the Unmanifest State. Thus, disparity is an indivisible part of nature and we have to live with it. Our efforts should be only to keep it in limits and take away the sting born out of it.

False Prophets

So any arrangement that tries to remove the inherent disparities altogether on the basis of superficial equality is bound to fail. Democracy, even at this advance stage in the Western countries, is after all, the rule by a few who are well versed in the art of politics and capable of winning the masses to their line. The concept of Democracy as being by the people and of the people, meaning that all are equal shares in the political administration, is, to a very large extent, only a myth in practice.

Communism, too, has completely failed to realise any of its declared concepts of equality. It had envisaged that after the establishment of the dictatorship of proletariat all will have food and other necessities of life satisfied. Then there will be no room for mutual conflict thus obviating the necessity for a central authority. Thus the State would wither away and a governmentless anarchic society would come into being. According to Communism, this is the highest state of equality that man can conceive of .

But Communism, based as it is on materialism, cannot explain how that ideal state can come to life. If men are mere animals, i.e, mere material beings, they do not devour each other only because of the fear of the powers that be. But when this power or authority is no more, then why will they live without strife? Man as an animal is a victim of passion and passions get more intense when gratified. How then will such a dissatisfied man live in peace and harmony with others? And what guarantee is there that even after the satisfaction of his personal needs, man, who is more ingenious than other animals will not follow the dog-in-the-manger policy? So even if we support that equality is established, it will again lead to inequality. Thus another bloody revolution will be necessitated. Which means, violent upheavals and strifes are the cornerstones of this theory. To raise always the slogan of revolution is to encourage and invite armed strifes, anarchy and murder of peace.

The picture which is thus visualised neither contains any signs of the withering away of the central power nor any possibility of the emergence of peace after the disappearance of the authority even if by chance it takes place. That during the past fifty years the Communist State in Russia has not shown any signs of withering away but has grown all the more powerful, is a living proof of the utter falsity of its theoretical base.

Not Equality but Harmony

Our philosophy, on the other hand, has pictured the highest state of society and offered for it a cogent explanation too. It is described as:

"Na rajyam na cha rajaaseet na dandyo na cha daandikah

Dharmenaiva prajah sarve rakshanti sma parasparam"

(*There existed no state, no king, no penalty and no criminal. All protected one another by virtue of dharma*). Dharma is the universal code of right conduct that awakens the Common Inner Bond, restrains selfishness, and keeps the people together in that harmonious state even without external authority. There will be no selfishness, no hoarding and all men will live and work for the whole.

And it is dharma that is the distinguishing feature of human life

"Aaharanidrabhayamaithunam cha

samanyametatpasubhirnaranam

Dharmo hi teshamadhiko visesah

dharmena heenah pasubhisamanah"

(*Food, sleep, fear and lust are common to both animal and man. The special attribute of man is dharma; without it he is no better than an animal*)

It is through the full manifestation of dharma in human life that human beings will be able to live in that state of highest harmony in spite of the inherent disparities in nature. It is like the co-operation of a blind man with a lame man. The lame man gets a leg and the blind man an eye. The spirit of co-operation takes away the sting of disparity.

Our view of the relation between individual and society has always been not one of conflict but of harmony and co-operation born out of the consciousness of a single Reality running through all the individuals. The individual is a living limb of the corporate social personality. The individual and the society supplement and

complement each other with the result that both get strengthened and benefited.

Mistaking Means for Ends

The essential point, therefore, is the moulding of individuals after the real image of man imbued with the sublime principles of innate oneness and harmony, i.e., of dharma. Indeed, a system works ill or well according as the men who work it out are bad or good. That is why, in the absence of men inspired with the right spirit, Democracy deteriorates into mediocracy and is often reduced to mobocracy. The tragedy of the various theories and isms propounded by the West is that they were taken to be the ends in themselves to the utter neglect of building the quality of man. They ignored the simple yet fundamental truth that systems and isms are at best only means for the fulfillment of mans life. It is mistaking the means for the ends that has landed these attempts in results diametrically opposite to what they had prophesied or expected.

Even to this day, democratic countries are plagued by grave social problems arising out of this basic confusion of placing system above man. The system of Democracy that they have evolved breeds two evils “ self-praise and vilification of others “ which poison the peace and tranquility of the human mind and disrupt the mutual harmony of individuals in society. In the present set-up both these are to be freely indulged in during elections.

This is the reason why in our national tradition, we did not bother much about the external form of the government but concentrated upon the moulding of man as the chief guiding factor in all our systems.

4. For a Right Structure : Political and Economic

Our country has now opted for the democratic structure. But if this arrangement has to succeed, it is essential that the common mass of people should be properly educated and enlightened. Making them mere literates will not serve the purpose. They have to be made aware of their role and responsibilities with respect to the various aspects of our national life such as politics, economics, etc.

Present Perversions

It is such an enlightened people alone who will be capable of electing the right type of representatives. If, on the other hand, the common people are uneducated and ignorant they can easily be swayed by the baser appeals of selfishness, parochial interests and vulgar inducements. Representatives elected by such an electorate would never be of a desirable type. And the people as a whole will have to suffer its bitter consequences-at least till the next elections. Such a failure will also result in disillusionment and scepticism about the efficacy of democracy itself.

The present system of electing representatives results in one more curious phenomenon. A doctor or an advocate or simply a "politician", who knows next to nothing about agriculture, gets elected as the spokesman of the rural electorate! The only qualification to get elected will be ones skill and capacity to manipulate votes and win the elections. The coming up of the present new class of politicians and representatives “ who are more of "politicians" than of "representatives" “ over the last three decades is because of this defective system.

A Few Samples

I came across a shocking instance during the days of war with Pakistan in 1965. Then the canals on our side had dried up as water had not been allowed from the dam. The canals of Pakistan side were, however, flowing full. When I happened to meet a deputy minister in the defence ministry I asked him as to why the canals had been denied water, whether it would not result in the drying up of crops and shortage of foodgrains and slackening on the internal front. The minister replied that the water flowing in the canals would be a defence risk as that would cause reflections and become an easy target for the enemy planes. When I countered him with the fact of the canals on the Pakistan side flowing full and whether they did not run the risk, the minister had no answer. A few days later I chanced to meet a senior minister. I asked him whether the deputy ministers explanation was correct. He replied that it was totally baseless and the deputy minister was entirely ignorant of such matters.

This is how representatives who know nothing of their jobs come to occupy pivotal positions of responsibilities in those fields. And those who are actually in the know of things-the technical experts-will be helpless in such matters. They will have to only carry out the orders from "above". In Bihar, as everyone knows, floods play havoc every year. I asked a railway engineer, who was an authority on bridges, whether the fact of flooding of rivers flowing from the mountains had been taken into account while deciding the number and the length of railway bridges. He confessed that it was not. He also pleaded that in such matters decisions were often based on political and other considerations rather than on the opinion of the experts.

“Territorial” Plus “Functional”

This is one of the major obstacles, which the present system of elections has thrown up. What is the way out? One way could be to couple both types of representation: one, the territorial, on the population basis, as at present; and the other, functional, i.e., representatives elected from the various professions and avocations. The latter should include representatives from each important field of national life, the agricultural community being represented by an agriculturist, and so on. This will help, to a certain extent, to correct the imbalance and make the elected group capable of representing all the functions and needs of the society.

Panchayat - the Cornerstone

It is this system which has been in vogue in our country since ancient times. Gram Panchayats have been the cornerstones of our socio-economic system. It is these Panchayats which through widening circles of elections, finally elected the Ashta Pradhan Samitis, the eight-member cabinet which acted as the advisory council to the king. These Panchayats were functional in their character. Of course, in those days life was not so complicated as at present. There were, mainly, four functional groups at that time. The first group comprised those devoted to study and teaching of material and spiritual sciences; the second, those entrusted with the running of administration. The third were the traders, and the fourth, those engaged in agriculture and allied handicrafts. There was a fifth group also residing in forests and living on hunting and forest produce. This fifth group was called the Nishada. Representatives of all these five together were taken so as to represent the interests of the society as a whole.

How to Correct

These days the slogan of Panchayat-raj is often heard. But the whole system has become perverted. Groupism and casteism have displaced the functional scheme. Notorious goondas often get elected to the Panchayats. Appeal to casteism, lure of money, threats, physical assaults have become the deciding factors; functional expertise has been thrown to winds. However, these distortions will have to be corrected. Well meaning and socially conscious persons in each field should be encouraged to come together and exert their influence so as to give a clean and effective rural base to the entire national edifice. Stipulating that elections to Panchayats shall be unanimous, or that there shall be no elections at all, would be a very useful step in this direction. Electoral rolls and rules of elections may be suitably modified so as to ensure such a healthy and purposeful structure at the base. If need be, the Constitution also may be suitably amended. This could help foster a spirit of greater co-operation among the various groups and harmonise their needs and interests. Of course, this approach is not all smooth sailing and does entail several obstacles. But this is an experiment worth trying and is likely to yield beneficial results and minimise the harmful effects of the present system.

Why Slavery to Words?

About the structuring of national economy also we have our traditional thought which lays emphasis not merely on the monetary aspect. We have called the Artha Shastra as Neeti Shastra. Today this neeti is limited to Rajneeti-Politics-only. But in our ancient view, both politics and economics came under that one word.

Today, economics has become the more important factor out of the two. And socialism is often held as an ideal in this regard. But there are so many brands of socialism that it has become well-nigh impossible to understand what exactly is its real nature and

content. Guild Socialism, Anarchism, Syndicalism, Communism are all described as various forms of Socialism. Whatever it is, why should we become slaves to such words? It is best that we start afresh basing our thinking on the original concepts reflecting the genius of our own soil. Of course, if there are any positive elements, which we could usefully take up from other thoughts, we must necessarily do so.

Retreat of Over-Centralisation

The basic principle of socialism, for example, is decentralisation of economic power. Socialism also emphasises that this decentralisation should be just and equitable. So far, there can be no difference of opinion. But the differences start the moment the question crops up as to who should be empowered to see that the decentralisation is just and proper. Which is the agency? These days the trend is gaining ground, that for carrying out decentralisation, centralisation is necessary; that in place of many centres of economic power the State alone should concentrate all the powers in its hands; that political power should alone be the effective centre and that it alone should have the monopoly on all means of production.

Under such a state of affairs, political authority becomes all-powerful and the entire society is reduced to slavery to the political masters. Only that much of power, which is doled out by the State, will come to the lot of the people. The quantity, the timing, the nature of doling out will all be decided by the rulers. The people will have to be content with playing a second fiddle to the all-powerful State.

However, the various experiments carried out in foreign countries in this direction have failed to deliver the goods. In the first flush of experimentation they went so far as to plan community

cooking and feeding in place of individual homes. They had also experimented with the idea that the children too belonged to the community and not to the individual parents. The infants would be fed and looked after en-masse. At regular intervals, the mother would go and feed her child. But where is the guarantee that the mother would find her own child in that multitude and at so short a time? There is no need even for that. She could feed the child, which she chanced to meet.

However, after all these experiments they have begun to learn, from bitter experience, that man is not a machine. Each individual has his own special characteristics, his own aptitudes and tastes. When this basic feature of human life was ignored and all were sought to be treated as parts of a lifeless machine, discontent grew. Conflicts ensued. Efficiency fell. And as a result they had to give up such experiments. No doubt, we can admire their spirit of exploration and experimentation. But it does not mean that we too should indulge in the same kind of the futile experiments!

Will Trusteeship Work?

We shall now independently and in the light of our own genius ponder over the problem of how best to bring into practice the basic principle of ensuring the just and proper decentralisation of economic power. Mahatma Gandhi has propounded the theory of trusteeship in the light of his perception of the tradition and life-philosophy of this land. In that concept, the human incentive for production is not crippled. He is urged to produce as much as possible. But he is not to look upon himself as the owner of all that wealth; it essentially belongs to the community. He is only to look upon himself as the trustee of that property in order to ensure its proper utilisation in the service of society.

No doubt this approach is in consonance with our ancient Hindu thought. But there is a serious handicap in this. In the present age,

the human mind has been so much confused and twisted out of shape that man is unable to muster his will and capacity for work where he is not able to secure profit for himself. We have to take into consideration this factor also. Take for example income tax. The Government has taxed so high that after a certain slab is crossed the man who produces will be able to retain hardly Rs.2.50 out of 100. Under such conditions the producer would naturally feel that there is no use in producing to that pitch and that a much lesser production would save money for him. Which means he will either begin to put in less effort or indulge in evasion of tax. This has been the experience not only in our country, but elsewhere also.

The opposite example of West Germany is often quoted. After the Second World War its economy had almost collapsed. And so the economic experts there decided to do away with all the curbs on the incentive for production. All controls were removed. As a result, there was a phenomenal economic growth. Then, they also planned how best to decentralise the wealth. It has been reported that this method has helped West Germany stabilise its economy and march ahead. The experience in industries all over the world is also not different. The labourers lose the incentive for work if they feel that they are not able to get suitable recompense.

Striking a Balance

So, we have to strike a balance in which the individuals incentive is kept alive and at the same time decentralisation of the produced wealth is also brought about. For this purpose some restraints will have to be placed on the individual. The concept of personal freedom cannot be so narrowly construed as to harm the interests of the community at large. Freedom of the individual to amass and enjoy the wealth has to be kept within certain limits so as to ensure freedom for all others in the society to have same opportunities for leading a happy and prosperous material life.

Herein comes the genius of the Hindu viewpoint, which prepares the individuals mind for this adjustment. He is educated and enlightened with regard to the true nature of happiness: the goal that is kept before him is not merely of physical enjoyment; that is not going to give him lasting happiness. For that he has to rise beyond his dependence on the physical objects, plunge into the depths of his own being and discover that eternal and boundless ocean of joy and bliss. He will then realise that the people around him are also manifestations of the same Spirit and that the enjoyment of the fruits of his labour by them is equivalent to his own enjoyment.

It is against the background of this life-attitude that a balance could be achieved. The individual could be assured of his right to property, which would enable him to meet the needs and responsibilities with regard to himself and his family. There should be some limited right to property (coupled with a ceiling on personal income) i.e., scope for fulfilling his desires for enjoyment to a limited degree, while at the same time stipulating his contribution towards fulfilling the needs of the other members of the community. Well, these could from the broad outlines for a pattern of economy, which could, in the present circumstances, ensure both the individual incentive and a just system of decentralisation.

Basis of Success

However, basic to the success of this system is the proper moulding of human attitudes. People should be imbued with the right philosophy of life. They should be able to check their self-centred propensities and be able to identify themselves with the joys and sorrows of their fellow beings. The spirit of self-discipline which alone will bring about this harmonious adjustment and co-operative effort for the all-round development of national prosperity is also to be inculcated. Thus, the building

up of such a social structure in which the individuals are imbued with the right perspective regarding the supreme goal of their life, with love and affinity for the entire society and spirit of self-discipline, becomes the one great mission of every son and daughter of this soil.

5. Call of our National Soul

Our concept of Hindu Nation is not a mere bundle of political and economic rights. It is essentially cultural. Our ancient and sublime cultural values of life form its life-breath. And it is only an intense rejuvenation of the spirit of our culture that can give us the true vision of our national life, and a fruitful direction to all our efforts in solving the innumerable problems confronting our nation today.

But these days, rejuvenation of culture is often dubbed as revivalism and reactionary. Revival of old prejudices, superstitions or anti-social customs may be called reactionary, as that would result in fossilisation of society. But rejuvenation of eternal and ennobling values of life can never be reactionary. To dub it as reactionary merely because it is old only betrays intellectual bankruptcy and nothing else. By the term "rejuvenation of our culture" we mean the reanimating in our lives of those eternal life-ideals that have nourished and immortalised our national life all these millennia.

Too Fine to be Defined

People sometimes ask, "How do you define Hindu culture". Well, we feel it, though we cannot define it. There are some who deny it altogether merely because they cannot define it. They say, "What is the use of a thing which we cannot define?" But will this argument stand to reason? For example, the entire course of medical science is evolved in order to protect life. But even the most modern scientists have not been able to define what life is. But that has not come in the way of the utility of medical science. The outward manifestation of life and its impact on man is sufficient to convince us of its actuality.

So also, our sentiments, ideals and aspirations have a reality of their own and have a very vital role in our life even though they cannot be expressed in terms of definitions and mathematical equations. In fact, it is such subtle factors that form the real human personality rather than such gross things as can be measured and defined.

Truth Defies Denials

Our culture too, though defying definition, has left its indelible stamp on all walks of our life. We can recognise the element of culture in all such manifestations. There is an example in the life of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. He used to view the problems of life mainly from the materialist standpoint. Things like God, religion, soul, transmigration of soul etc., had no meaning for him. Then a time came when unfortunately his wife, who was taken abroad for medical treatment, died. According to our custom her body was cremated-not buried, but cremated. It was reduced to a small handful of ashes. What was to be done with it? An agnostic must say, "This is merely ash and its only profitable use is to put it in the field as manure". According to materialism there is no point in showing any consideration to mere ash". Dust thou art and to dust thou returnest" is all that it can say.

There was an intense tussle in Pandit Nehrus mind-between the agnostic in him calling upon him to throw away the ashes in that foreign land and return, and the call of his ancient Hindu blood urging him to bring those sacred relics of his beloved wife and offer them in the bosom of Gangamata. Finally the ancient samskars won. The ashes were brought to our land and immersed at the holy confluence of Ganga, Yamuna and the invisible Saraswati at Prayag. As Pandit Nehru himself said later, his intellect, his modern education and training were all in revolt but something in him, something inexplicable, forced him to immerse

the ashes in the Triveni-sangam. This is samskar, the imprint of culture.

What then are the manifestations of that culture in our national life?

The Living God

The first and the most fundamental aspect is the urge for realisation of the Supreme Reality permeating the entire Universe-whatever the name given to it. Or in simple words, it is to realise God. But where is God? How can we know Him? How does He look? What are His appearances, His attributes, that we may meditate upon Him and realise Him? The description that He is nirakar (without form), nirguna (without attributes) and all that leads us nowhere. Various ways of worship are also evolved. People go to temples and try to concentrate on the idols taking them to be emblems of the Almighty. But all this does not satisfy us who are full of activity. We want a living God. What is the use of a God who only hears but does not respond? These emblems neither weep nor smile nor show any reaction, unless of course of the persons are devotees of any reaction, unless of course the persons are devotees of extraordinary high merit. But for all ordinary persons they are non-feeling emblems of the Almighty. Therefore we want a living God which will engross us in activity and invoke all the powers that reside in our being.

Our forefathers therefore said, "Our People are our God". Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, one of the greatest teachers of mankind, said, Serve man. His great disciple Swami Vivekananda also stated the same emphatically. But man, in the sense of the whole of humanity, is a very wide concept and as such, cannot be grasped easily as a single solid entity for us to see and feel. Therefore it is that so many who took up the idea of serving humanity ended in inanity and inaction. Hence our forefathers,

understanding the limitations of the human mind and intellect, said, "Humanity and all that is all right, but before one can rise to that stage, one should take a view of the Almighty with certain limitations as it were, which one can understand, feel and serve". The Hindu People, they said, is the Virat Purusha, the Almighty manifesting Himself.

True Spirit of Service

This supreme vision of Godhead in society is the very core of our concept of nation and has permeated our thinking and given rise to various unique concepts of our cultural heritage.

That vision inspires us to look upon every individual of our society as a part of that Divine Whole. All individuals are therefore equally sacred and worthy of our service. Therefore any sense of discrimination amongst them is reprehensible. Thus, in our culture, the spirit of social service has been sublimated into worship of God.

There are millions of human beings all around us who live in hunger and destitution, deprived of even the barest necessities of life, and whose stories of misery will move the stoniest of hearts. It is verily God who has taken those forms of the poor, the destitute and the suffering. What for? Does He want anything? He is the very embodiment of all power, all knowledge, and is the Master of all. Then what is it that He wants? He comes in those forms to give us an opportunity to serve Him. Sri Ramakrishna Paramhamsa called them Daridra Narayana (destitute God)

Once our life becomes soaked with this true spirit of service, we will feel that all our individual and family possessions, however abundant they may be, do not really belong to us. These are only the means to worship God in the form of society. Our whole life

will then be an offering in the service of society. The Upanishads say :

"Ishavasyamidam sarvam yatkincha jagatyam jagat

Tena tyaktena Bhunjeetha ma gridhah kasyasvid dhanam"

(*God permeates all Creation. Whatever is left over by Him, after offering Him, enjoy only that much. Do not rob what belongs to others*)

Let us therefore acquire maximum of material wealth so that we can serve God in the form of society in the best possible manner. And out of all that wealth, only that minimum should be used for our sake the denial of which will hamper our capacity for service. To claim or to make a personal use of more than that, is verily an act of theft against society.

In Bhagavata Narada says :

"Yavad bhriyeta jatharam tavat svatvam hi dehinam

Adhikam yobhimanyeta sa steno dandamarhati"

(*Take whatever is essential for bodily sustenance. To take more is an act of theft and deserves to be punished*)

Thus we are only the trustees of society. It is only when we become trustees in the true sense that we can serve society best. Such a pure attitude of service will leave no scope for ego or self-adulation.

Duty in Place of Right

Today we hear everywhere the clamour for rights. All our political parties too are rousing the ego in our people by constantly speaking of their rights. Nowhere is there any stress on duties and the spirit of selfless service. The spirit of co-operation which is the soul of society can hardly survive in a climate of assertion of egocentric rights. That is why we are finding conflicts among the various component parts in our national life today, between the teacher and the taught, the labourer and the industrialist, and so on. It is only by an assimilation of our cultural vision that the true spirit of co-operation and consciousness of duty can be revived in our national life.

Our Cultural Prism

One more peak of the Himalayan vision of our culture, which none else in the world has so far aspired to climb, is the spirit of ***Ekam sat viprah bahudha vadanti*** (*Truth is one, sages call it variously*). There is no equivalent expression in English to convey this beautiful sentiment. The word tolerance, which is often used to express this idea is very meek, it is just another word for sufferance. It implies an element of ego, which just tolerates other viewpoints without any love or respect for them. But our training has been one of respecting and even accepting other faiths and viewpoints as so many paths to reach the same truth.

It is like the various descriptions of a hill by persons who have gone by different routes to the top. One man says that it appears like a single colossal rock, another says it is all forest and no rock, the third says it is full of shrubs and so on. Everyone is correct, though imperfect. The sum total of all such imperfect descriptions give us a complete and perfect description of the hill. One by two or one by three is a fraction. But by adding up all such fractions it is possible to get a whole number, an integer.

In the same manner, individuals, though imperfect, when merged into a corporate whole, can give rise to a perfect society. And therefore, the superficial difference born out of the imperfections of the individuals are only indicative of the diverse manifestations of the one great and perfect and mighty reality-the society. This appreciation of the inherent spark of Truth, of Divinity in every individual, has penetrated into our various components and spheres of life-religious, social, political and economic-and fashioned them for a harmonious pattern of mutual goodwill and respect. This catholicity of spirit is an altogether unique contribution of our culture to the world thought.

Raising the Average

It is only when we revive these sublime features of our culture that our people in general will be inspired by the true vision of our national life so as to break their present shell of personal and family and other parochial considerations and rise high in character, service and sacrifice. A nation cannot rise on an average of dwarfs with only a few extraordinary personalities standing as giants amidst them. To be endowed with extraordinary qualities is the good fortune of a few. We bow down to such souls, and having bowed down to them, still we, the average men, ask the questions of ourselves, "What about us?" Such exceptional lives may give us courage. But sometimes they also depress us with the thought that we are all on the ground unable to rise to such glorious heights. What is the way out?

A comparative study-even by the foreign historians and travellers of those days-tells us that the average man of this country was at one time incomparably superior to the average man of the other lands. The obvious reason was that sustaining and strenuous efforts had been kept up by the leaders of our society to inculcate cultural samskars in all strata of society. That is why we find great saints and heroes coming up from all sections of our people right

from those given to learning and knowledge down to peasants, weavers, cobblers, scavengers and so on, whose thoughts and deeds, songs and sayings have inspired the whole of our people, crossing all superficial barriers.

Present Awakening

Today, the utter absence of this correct cultural perspective has landed our people in an endless scourge of problems-all stemming from the common source of the low level of the average man. We often hear that there has been a great awakening, a growing political consciousness among our people. Awakening is knowledge and knowledge is the capacity to realise unity in diversity, to find harmony in place of conflict, and to worship society in the place of self. The tendencies of fission should therefore disappear giving rise to urge for unity. If, on the other hand, we do not work for the unity of our people but exploit the various problems to create more factions, then we are not progressing from ignorance to knowledge but only sinking into greater depths of ignorance.

But then, what is the meaning of so much of activity, so many movements and agitations going on all around us? Well, living beings even though struck unconscious still exhibit activity. For instance, we can see through a microscope the blood flowing in the capillaries of a frog even when deprived of external consciousness. Is it progressing? No! On the other hand it is dying. Similarly, even at the peak of ignorance, activities do take place. A casual look at the motives that inspires most of our present-day activities is sufficient to convince us that they are not born out of real awakening, i.e., knowledge, but out of darkness and ignorance.

Purge Present Perversions

When we speak of our sublime cultural values, persons steeped in the modern Western civilisation think that it is something mysterious, something otherworldly. That only shows the present depths of our mental slavery, which has deprived us of even the capacity to grasp those principles, which were once the glory of our national life. Once a friend of mine had borrowed a book from me. On the day he was to return it a monkey took it away. It sat on a tree-top, held it this way and that (probably it had observed my friend doing that!), opened and closed it several times and finally came back and, to my friends amazement, kept it back on the table and went away, probably thinking that the doings of human beings were all mysterious and secret! Something similar is our condition today regarding the teachings of our culture.

The other extreme that we witness today is to identify singing and dancing, cinemas and dramas with culture. We find such cultural programmes going on everywhere in our country. Culture has verily become another name for cheap entertainment. This has gone to such a ludicrous and humiliating extent, that notorious filmstars wallowing in depths of moral depravity are included in our cultural delegations to foreign countries! Such persons going about as the cultural representatives of a land that has produced a Rama and a Sita, and has sent as its cultural ambassadors great seers and philosophers in the past and a Vivekananda and a Ramatirtha in the modern times, who commanded the spontaneous love and adoration of the whole world, is a lurid reflection on our present degradation.

We also see many of our leading cultural men associating themselves as judges in the Miss India beauty contests. It seems, in their concept of our culture, of the ideal of our womanhood, a Sita or a Savitri, a Padmini or a Nivedita has no place. In that contest, indeed we miss the real beauty of India!

Silent or Secret?

We have to rid ourselves of these present-day perversions and assimilate the eternal and life-giving essence of our culture. Obviously this is a work of imparting cultural samskars, which has to take place in an atmosphere free from public fanfare and propaganda and go on silently and steadily day after day and year after year. But today, in the absence of the real perspective of our culture, silence is often mistaken for secrecy. Our culture does not advocate exhibitionism.

For instance, the Hindu husband and wife do not display their love openly. The Hindu wife does not express her love through tears, embraces or screams. The Westerners, on the other hand, show their love through dramatic embraces and kisses. This is mostly an outward show-as there is the danger of their divorce the very next day! Our men do not indulge in exhibition but their face will be aglow with love. And that love continues forever without the fear of any break. Our culture has always taught us that restraint of emotions is more potent and charming than extravagant demonstration. If our way of expressing love is considered as dignified, then the silent method of working is also dignified.

Watering the Immortal Roots

The work of rejuvenating these ancient and life-giving features of our culture has assumed a new urgency and paramountcy not only in our present national context but in the international context as well. Our cultural vision which furnishes the true basis for love and harmony between man and man and embodies a complete philosophy of life needs to be effectively presented to the present-day war-torn world. If we have to succeed in this great world mission, we have to first set our own standards. We should shake ourselves free from the mental shackles of foreign isms and foreign ways and fleeting fashions of modern life. There can be no greater national humiliation than to be a mere carbon copy of

others. Let us remember that blind imitation is not progress. It only leads us to spiritual subjection.

However, we believe that the present perversions and misconceptions are only a passing phase. Our cultural roots are too firm and too deeply struck into the spring of immortality to be easily dried up. They are bound to assert their age-old vigour and vitality and throw out the parasitic growth of the past few centuries and sprout forth once again in all their pristine purity and grandeur.

6. For True National Glory

Our one supreme goal is to bring to life the all-round glory and greatness of our Hindu Rashtra. In order to have a correct grasp of this goal, we should understand what exactly this "great glory", param vaibhavam as we call it in our Prathana, connotes. Then we have also to understand how to attain and maintain that glorious condition of our nation.

Ordinarily, the glory of a nation is measured in terms of its material affluence. There is no doubt that a nation in glory has necessarily to be in affluence. All the necessities of life must be fully provided to every individual in the nation. But, is that the complete image of our national glory that we conceive of? This is an all-important question which we have to ponder over.

Our Vision of Glory

Each nation has its own key-note in life and marches ahead in tune with that national ethos. Our Hindu Nation has also preserved a unique characteristic since times immemorial. To us, the aspects of material happiness, i.e., artha (the amassing of wealth) and kama (the satisfaction of physical desires) are only a part of mans life. Our great ancestors declared that there are two more aspects of human endeavour, dharma and moksha. They built up our society on the basis of this fourfold achievement, the chaturvidha purushartha of dharma, artha, kama and moksha. Since hoary times our society has been known not merely for its wealth and affluence but more so for the other two aspects of life. We are therefore called a highly moral, spiritual and philosophical people, who have kept as their ultimate goal nothing short of direct communication with God Himself, i.e. moksha. If this final aim of human existence is left out, then what remains except the feeding of the brute in man? If it is a fact that there is a difference

between man and the animal, then the concepts of prosperity and happiness for the two also must differ. If to eat, drink and enjoy abundantly is the only criterion for both, man will have to be equated with a mere beast. Therefore we say that we have also to feed the spirit of man. It is only when we do that, that we can look upon our national existence as being really great and glorious.

So, when we think of the greatness and glory of our nation, we not only think of its wealth and affluence, of all the means of satisfaction of the necessities of the body but also of the mind of the individual which should be made to gradually rise above all these things and place him in a position to which he is entitled as a human being, that is, in direct relation with divinity. It has been said, ***dharmaadarthascha kaamascha***, that is, first follow dharma, and dharma will also give artha and kama.

Role of Dharma

When we say that we want to protect and rejuvenate dharma, do we mean the revival of its external form of rituals and formalities? In our country, some people wear the sacred thread " yajnopavita " while some do not. Some keep a tuff of hair, some do not. Some worship idols, some do not. These things have meaning for those who have faith in them. And they are just small external signs of our all-comprehensive dharma. They must not be confused with dharma itself.

Our definition of dharma is twofold. The first is proper rehabilitation of mans mind; and the second is adjustment of various individuals for a harmonious corporate existence, i.e., a good social order to hold the people together.

Let us take the first aspect. What is meant by the rehabilitation of mind? We know that the personality of man is only a projection of his mind. But the mind is like an animal, which runs after so

many things and it is so constituted as to be one with all the desired things. Ordinarily, mans mind does not stop to consider what is right and what is wrong. It stoops to any level in order to fulfil its desires. With such a mind, man is not likely to rise higher than the level of an ordinary animal. Therefore the mind is to be cultivated in self-restraint and certain other great qualities. Those attributes of good conduct are mentioned in various contexts in the Bhagavad-Gita and our other holy scriptures. They have described five yamas for the body and five niyamas for the mind.

The other is the social aspect. Mans life has to be attuned to the wider interests of the people as a whole. Both these aspects are complementary to each other. The first aspect is defined as

"***Yato abhydaya nisreyasa siddhih sa dharmah"***

which means that the arrangement which enables and encourages man to control his desires and create within himself the competence to realise the Divine Essence or the Eternal Reality even while enjoying a rich material life, is dharma. The second aspect is –

"Dharanat dharmamityahuh dharmo dharayati prajah"

which means that the power which brings individuals together and sustains them as a society is called dharma. A combination of these two definitions shows that the establishment of dharma means the building of an organised social life wherein each individual has realised his oneness with others in society and is imbued with a spirit of sacrifice to make others material life richer and happier, and develops spiritual strength which leads to the realisation of the Ultimate Truth.

There is no more way of looking at this blending of the development of the individual with the integrity and welfare of

the society. We have been told by our great thought-givers to discriminate between what is permanent and what is impermanent. Shankaracharya has called it nityanitya-vastu-viveka. Let us, for the time being, keep apart its high philosophical interpretations and apply to our national life. Individuals come and go. Countless generations have come and gone. But the nation has remained. Drops of water come, stay for a while and evaporate; but the flow of the Ganga goes on ceaselessly. So is the eternal flow of our national life. We, the individuals, appear on the surface like bubbles or drops for a moment, and disappear. The `permanent, therefore, is the national life. The impermanent is the individual. The ideal arrangement would therefore be to transform the impermanent-the individual-into a means to attain the permanent " the social good " which would at the same time enable the individual to enrich and bring to blossom his latent divinity. This is dharma in its twofold aspect, which leads mankind to its ultimate goal of Realisation of Godhead-moksha.

The Present Warnings

Unfortunately, the persons at the helm of affairs of our country today have lost this national vision and become infatuated with foreign isms, which have not risen beyond the materialist view of prosperity and glory. They have given currency to the slogan of raising the standard of life, which only means increasing mans desires and trying to fulfil them by increasing physical comforts and conveniences. The luxuries of today become the necessities of tomorrow and thus goes on the endless struggle for more and more satiation of mans desires of the flesh.

It is a matter of common experience that physical desires can never be satiated. The more one attempts to satisfy them the more intense they grow, even as fire blazes instead of going out when oil is poured into it. Tolstoy has written a very instructive story

under the title "How much land does a man need?" A peasant was promised free all land he could run round from sunrise till sunset. In his sheer greed to cover more and more land he ran so far that he never got back to the starting place before sunset, and in utter exhaustion he died. Only a strip of land, seven by two and half feet, was needed to bury him!

It is also well known that a person who has a bundle of unsatisfied desires can never be happy in spite of any amount of multiplication of the means for their satisfaction. In America, for example, in spite of its boundless affluence and prosperity, the incidence of various sorts of heinous crimes and mental diseases in all strata of society is growing at an alarming rate. Millions of Americans drug themselves every night with sleeping pills before going to bed. This only betrays a serious lacuna in their philosophy of life. Having kept the political and economic factors as the sole and supreme consideration in life, they have ignored the roots of spirituality which alone restrain and ennoble the human mind and nurture the human soul to grow and blossom in peace and happiness.

In Practice

Let us not, therefore, forget that it was the complete life-concept of chaturvidha purushartha that marked out our society and made our name shine bright on the horizon of the world. Our national past bears ample testimony to the fact that this life-concept was not just a Utopia but a living reality for thousands of years of our national life. All the foreign travellers who visited our land have vouchsafed for the supreme quality of man attained here in addition to limitless wealth and affluence. The sublime character of our people was a result of the complete life-concept “ the harmonious blending of artha and kama with the higher values of dharma and moksha “ that we had worked out on the individual as also on the national plane.

History records countless examples of other countries bowing down to our nation in utmost veneration because of the sterling character of our spiritual giants who strode all over the world to carry the message of divinity in man. Later on, our Buddhist monks and missionaries too who crossed the borders and reached distant lands were revered and their examples and teachings set up as standards in all those countries. A disciple of Buddha had gone to Tibet, China and Japan. His idol was actually worshipped as God in these countries. How did this miracle happen? It was the intense spirit of self-sacrifice and service, the all-embracing love, and the sheer merit of noble character of such missionaries that made them the cultural preceptors of these people and earned the name Vishwa Guru " World Teacher " for our Bharat.

The need for emphasising this aspect in our national life today becomes all the more evident when we find our people going out to other countries whether as ambassadors or professors, as students or businessmen or merry-go-travellers, cutting sorry figures in those countries, wallowing in physical pleasures, behaving no better and many times even worse than those people.

Our real national regeneration should therefore start with the moulding of man, by instilling in him the strength to overcome human frailties and to stand up as a shining symbol of Hindu manhood embodying within himself our traditional virtues of love, self-restraint, sacrifice, service and character. We should unfailingly keep this vision, this real essence of our glorious nationhood, before our eyes so that we can again rise to our original pedestal of the world preceptor.

The Sanction

Now, we come to the second aspect of the question. In the present-day world, what should we do to attain and maintain that highest pinnacle of national glory, resplendent with its fourfold

achievement of life? We know that such a glorious condition stands in danger of destruction either by internal disorders or external aggressions. Our own history tells us that both the factors have been responsible for bringing us down from a state of glory, that was once the envy of the world, to the present despicable condition. Today, therefore, we have to rebuild our national life so that we will be able to ward off both these dangers.

It is well known that in this age, especially, the strength to protect ourselves from external aggression and internal chaos lies in the organised life of the people.- ***Sanghe shaktih kalau yuge***. Therefore, when we say that our nation should be taken to the pinnacle of glory, it also means that the people should be made alert, organised and powerful. After all, nations can stand only upon the solid foundation of their organised strength. Other aspects of life such as food, clothing, shelter, medicine and other physical requirements, however necessary are only secondary. The first and foremost prerequisite is the invincible organised life of the people without which even the highest national prosperity will crumble to dust in no time.

Weak Links Do Not Make a Strong Chain

Let us now look for the source of such a strength. Where does it reside? We say, it lies in the organised life of the people. But, what type of people? They should be such as are imbued with unity of mind and thought, bound together with a common code of morality and faith in each other, and filled with absolute loyalty to the nation. Unless they are such, their organised strength is not likely to protect the nation. On the other hand, it may prove to be a menace to national life. (For example, selfish and antisocial elements and even thieves and dacoits get themselves organised).

We also find that it is easier to gather together selfish people without character for purposes, which are detrimental to social welfare. Today, such groups having their own sectarian or other narrow interests are coming up throughout the country. In order to satisfy their selfish interests they are even prepared to destroy the sanctity and unity of our national life. Such persons can come together very easily. That is the lowest stratum of organised life. In the lower strata of life, organisation is very simple, very easy. A whole flock of crows assembles if we just throw a piece of flesh. That is the herd instinct. This instinct comes into play, when wider grasp of national life is lost sight of and narrow concepts of sect, creed, caste or some such things reign supreme in the mind. But we should not take to this line simply because it is easy.

Therefore, we conclude that organised strength has to be built up by the bringing together of proper persons. Then, what are the qualities required of individuals who will form the living limbs of such an organised strength?

Strength is Life, Weakness is Death

The first thing is invincible physical strength. We have to be so strong that none in the whole world will be able to overawe and subdue us. For that, we require strong and healthy bodies. All our Incarnations who came in the human form have been such. The essence of our scriptural message has been strength is life, weakness is death. Swami Vivekananda used to say, "I want men with muscles of iron and nerves of steel". He himself was like that. Finding that some co-disciples were always sitting down and shedding tears, he would thunder, "That is not bhakti. That is nervous weakness. Dont sit down and weep like little girls".

What do we see today when we look at ourselves in a mirror? Do we find any sign of manliness and strength? Dont say, "What is there after all in a body?" Our shastras say

“Shareeramaadyam khalu dharma saadhanam”

(*Body is the primary instrument for fulfilling our duties in life*) Without an able body, we cannot achieve anything. Even to see God, a healthy and strong body is required. God is not for the weak:

“Naayamaatma balaheenena labhyah”

When we sit to meditate upon God, if our head begins to reel, our back begins to ache and we begin to quail and shiver in our own seat, then the result is no God, but only fever! The present-day fashion of our young men of decorating the skin and and discarding the sinews must be given up and they should, with proper exercises and healthy habits, develop strong bodies capable of resisting heat and cold, hunger and exertion and of undergoing all the hardships of life with good cheer.

Character is All

Physical strength is necessary, but character is more important. Strength without character will only make a brute of man. Purity of character from the individual as well as the national standpoint, is the real life-breath of national glory and greatness.

There is the story of Prahlad which depicts the importance of character. As a result of his meritorious deeds, he drove away Indra and became the king of gods. Indra approached Brihaspati- the guru of gods “ and said, "Sir, you know my pitiable plight.

What shall I do to regain my throne?" Brihaspati said, "Dress yourself as an ordinary mendicant, go to the durbar of Prahlad at the hour of Ichhadan, i.e., when he gives away whatever the beggars ask, and ask for his sheela(character)." Indra obeyed. He went to Prahlad as a beggar and asked him his sheela.

Prahlad said, "Why are you satisfied with only my sheela?" "That is sufficient for me," replied the mendicant. "You can have it", said Prahlad. Immediately after he said this, an effulgent being came out of his body and entered the body of the mendicant. "Who are you? Why are you entering the body of the mendicant leaving my body?" asked Prahlad. "I am your sheela. As you have given me away to him. I have to enter his body now", the effulgent spirit replied. In a fraction of second another brilliant form came out. Once again Prahlad asked "Who are you? Why are you leaving my body?" I am your shaurya (prowess). I am only a servant of sheela. So long as you had sheela I served you. Now that sheela has gone away, I am also following sheela." So saying, it also entered the body of the mendicant. Like this a few more effulgent forms left Prahlads body. Lastly, a brilliant shining form of woman came out of him. She said, "Well, I am your Rajyashree (Goddess of Royal Glory). I too am a servant of sheela. As you have given up your sheela, I am going." As a result, Prahlad lost all his power and glory and Indra regained his throne.

The moral of the story, in a nutshell, is that if endowed with character we can achieve anything, and without character we stand to lose everything. This is as much true of nations as of individuals. Therefore, the two aspects of character, individual and national, are like the twin lungs of national glory.

Robust Common Sense for Success

Now, suppose we have a strong body and a pure and devoted heart. But, how to use the body and the mind? For that, we require intellectual acumen capable of grasping the realities and intricacies of the situation and deciding ones right conduct. We should therefore develop power of concentration, sharpen our intellect and acquire the power to pitch upon the right action at the right moment. And we should also be prompt and dynamic in acting up to decisions.

Without such practical wisdom, all our goodness and strength will be of no avail. Many a page of disaster in our past history was a result of the want of robust common sense. Let us not forget that the path of national reorganisation is not a bed of roses. And without sagacity, mere sincerity will not avail us when faced with knaves and crooks. One need not be an intellectual to achieve skill and wisdom in the practical world. Even persons in the common strata of society can cultivate such wisdom. There is the example of one of our workers, an ordinary unlettered farmer in a village, who could guide and control ten to fifteen surrounding villages even during critical situations. He could also give proper guidance to the village elders in all walks of life. Each one of us should rouse within ourselves the conviction that I am born with living seeds of wisdom, which, if properly nurtured, shall surely take me to success and strive to live accordingly.

Fearlessness

Suppose we have a strong body, purity of character, a keen intellect, but no fortitude, what is the use? All the time, circumstances are not going to favour us. We shall have to face obstacles and adversities. Fearlessness is the first virtue of a hero, the starting point of all other noble virtues. Even in the Gita, the enumeration of the various godly qualities starts with abhayam (fearlessness). Our founder, Dr. Hedgewar, used to say that the

work of national consolidation should proceed in such a way that it neither frightens anybody nor will be afraid of anybody:

“Naa bhaya deta kahu ko naa bhaya jaanata aap”

All our ideal heroes have been the embodiment of fearlessness and fortitude. A large army headed by Khara and Dushana came to attack Rama. Dust was seen clouding the sky. Seeing the enemy approaching, Rama said to Lakshmana, "Sita is not accustomed to all these things. You stay here protecting her. I will finish these fellows and come back." So saying, he went alone with the bow in his hand. Sita trembled to see him going alone. Then Lakshmana said, "What of this fourteen thousand, he is capable of destroying the entire army of Ravana single-handed. Be at ease." After annihilating the rakshasas, Rama came back as though nothing had happened “ cool, quiet and unruffled as ever.

The spirit of heroism is necessary even to worship God. A coward cannot do it. In *jnaneswari*, it is said that when a person sits to meditate upon God he will see terrible forms, and if he is a chicken-hearted fellow, he will be simply undone. Nothing can be achieved by cowards, either in this world or the other. If we are on the right path, there is no reason to be afraid of anything.

One of our workers died some years ago. I met him a week before he died. He told me, " No treatment seems to have had any effect upon me. I have no hopes of recovery. I feel I am dying soon." I said to him, "You have served a great ideals selflessly and untiringly. You have done no harm to anyone and have always been doing good to all. Why then should you be afraid of death? Rejoice and meet death peacefully!" And he did face death with peace and tranquility. Such a spirit of fearlessness born out of the conviction that we are doing good, that we are on the right path, will take us a long way in achieving our ideal.

First Loyalty “ to Ideal

That is not all. We need an urge to develop in ourselves all these qualities. Intense devotion to the ideal that we have placed before us, will give us the necessary urge to equip ourselves with all the great qualities required for achieving the glory of our nation.

Duty to Country First

There may be occasions when conflicts arise in our mind while fixing priorities among our several duties. Then we will have to discriminate, take a detached view and respond to the supreme call of the ideal that we have chosen for our life. The martyrdom of Tanaji Malasure is a shining example in this regard. When Shivaji sent word to him and assigned him the challenging task of winning the formidable Kondana fort (later called Sinhagad), Tanaji was busy making preparations for his sons marriage. But at the word of Shivaji, Tanaji gave up the thought of the marriage saying, "My sons marriage may well wait for some time; I will first carry out the command of my king. My first duty is towards the Swaraj". Without a moments hesitation Tanaji proceeded to conquer Kondana. The heroic attempt was crowned with success, but it claimed as its price the life of Tanaji himself.

It is when we bend all our energies towards this fundamental process “ the great process of man-making “ that our ancient and sacred nation can once again attain its original position of greatness and glory, shedding peace and plenty, culture and character all-round.

7. Live Positive Dynamic Hinduism

When we say that the Sangh is dedicated to the rejuvenation of the great and unique Hindu way of life, there are many who confront us with the question, "First of of all, how do you define a Hindu?" Well, it is really a tough job. Once a gentleman remarked "I can define a Mussalman or a Christian, but I cannot define a Hindu." He was right when he said so. We can define the Sun and the Moon, but the ultimate Reality from which all these things have emerged cannot be defined. But does it mean that it does not exist? Merely because it refuses to be clothed in symbols and defies definition, does it prove Its non-existence? Sri Ramakrishna has said that God alone is "anuchhishtha", pure and undefined, because He alone has never been described, never been defiled by any tongue. Everything else we can define, but not that all-comprehensive something called Reality.

The Indefinable Hindu

We, the Hindus, have based our whole existence on God and therefore, it is probable that the Hindu Society has developed in an all-comprehensive manner, with a bewildering variety of phases and forms, but with one thread of unification running inherently through the multitude of its expressions and manifestations. All the sects, the various castes in the Hindu fold, can be defined, but the term Hindu cannot be defined because it comprises all. Of course, many attempts at definition have been made from time to time, but all such definitions have proved to be incomplete. They do not express the whole truth and it is but natural in the case of a people who have been growing and evolving for the last so many scores of centuries.

The origin of our people, the date from which we have been living here as a civilised entity, is unknown to the scholars of history. In

a way, we are anadi, without a beginning. To define such a people is impossible, just as we cannot express or define Reality because words came into existence after the Reality. Similar is the case with the Hindu People. We existed when there was no necessity for any name. We were the good, enlightened people. We were the people who knew about the laws of nature and the laws of the Spirit. We built a great civilisation, a great culture and an unique social order. We had brought into actual life almost everything that was beneficial to mankind. Then the rest of humanity were just bipeds and so no distinctive name was given to us. Sometimes, in trying to distinguish our people from others, we are called the enlightened " the Aryas " and the rest Mlechhas. When different faiths arose in foreign lands in course of time and those alien faiths came in contact with us, then the necessity for naming was felt. Various names were given at different times, just as the Ganga is called Gangotri, Bhagirathi, Jahnavi and Hooghly at different stages. And the name Hindu, derived from the river Sindhu, has been associated with us in our history and tradition for so long that it has now become our universally accepted and adored name.

Life with Aim

So, here we are, Hindus, though defying all definitions, all the same a reality. The Hindu Society is a living reality which all of us feel and experience in every drop of our blood. But though we cannot define it, we can and must be able to appreciate the special features which mark out the Hindus as a distinct people. We cannot say that merely because a particular individual is not a Muslim or a Christian, he is a Hindu by the process of elimination. In our country, the Hindu is often referred to by political leaders as non-Muslim. That is not a healthy, positive way of understanding our real nature. Hindu is not a negative being. What, then, is the positive content of that word?

To a Hindu, life is not without an aim. That aim is not one of greatness measured in terms of power, position, name or fame. The realisation of his true nature-the innate Spark of Divinity, the Reality in him-which alone takes man to the state of everlasting supreme bliss, is the one great aim before him. But man has only a short span of life. How can he reach that supreme stage within such a small period? He does not know fully even about his own body even though he uses it throughout his physical existence. Then, how can he know that which is an immanent in the body? The law of cause and effect says that each action of ours " the cause " has its effect. The circle of cause and effect has to grow, develop and culminate. As such, the present existence of man cannot comprise the whole story of his real being. Since the distinctive natural urge in man is to expand and express his diving nature, he will be born again and again so long as the least trace of ignorance of his true Divine Self remains, and in every birth he will be able to make further progress if he makes honest efforts.

This theory of rebirth for the realisation of our oneness with that Ultimate Reality is the one great hope for the human soul. It is the lighthouse of Hinduism alone which sheds this light of immortal hope that all is not over with this present life, that there is eternal time before us to put our shoulders to the wheel, life after life, and reach the destination. It is the Hindu alone, in the vast mass of humanity, who holds aloft this torch of hope and confidence. All our holy scriptures, all our sects, old or recent, have these fundamentals ingrained in them.

Serve Man

With this, we go forward. We are living in this world. We are surrounded by innumerable worldly charms and distractions. Probably we may not, even for once, think over the real aim of life. Then, how are we to conduct ourselves so that we may be able to progressively realise, during the course of our life, our real

nature and not degenerate into further and further ignorance thus dragging ourselves down in the scale of evolution? The law recognises that if a man commits a harmful act, without, however, any evil motive, his fault is less. Sometimes he is even supposed to be absolved of all his sin. If we, therefore, act without any selfish motive, do things out of a sense of duty, i.e., if we take out the personal attachment from our action, the motive of personal enjoyment therein, then the various actions and their fruits do not affect us. Then we are completely absolved from the effects and shocks of the external world and we will be able to concentrate on our True Self. So, our philosophy says, do your work, do your duty in a selfless spirit.

Now, what is the nature of the work we have to do? What is the nature of our duty? From where are we to begin and how are we to lead our life so that we may reach that Ultimate Reality? Is it possible to do it by merely proclaiming that there is something which is called Reality, which will in course of time automatically manifest Itself? No! We must be able to see its objective manifestation in this objective world, something concrete, something living which we can feel and experience and through which we will be able to complete the process of realisation. Our philosophers have placed man as that objective manifestation of Reality, as the object of worship and service. They declared, "Like ourselves, every man is a spark of the same Reality. Let us try to identify our joys and sorrows with an ever-increasing circle of men, expand thus our being and ultimately realise the Great Reality pervading the entire universe".

What, then, is the arrangement that makes it possible for every one of us to serve man, each according to his stage of evolution?

Man does not live alone. He shuns solitude. He is gregarious by nature. So, human beings come together and live as social beings in the form of society. Thus he can live well, develop, and

manifest the best in him. He can thus rise in the social rung and progress towards the fulfillment of the aim of life. It means that the building up and maintenance of a social order capable of affording each individual full opportunities to identify himself with wider and wider social groups and serve society with all that he possesses, is the best way for lighting up the path of every individual towards the realisation of the Ultimate Truth. Therefore, we have said, "Let us serve society without any selfish ambition or selfish attachment". Service to humanity is verily service to God. This has been a special feature of our philosophy of life.

Our Models

With this ultimate aim always before our eyes, it was natural that throughout our history we have laid great store by the qualities of head and heart conducive to the welfare of humanity rather than the amount of earthly riches that one possesses. The richness of heart, the purity of mind and the nobility of character have always been the touchstone of our values of life. The standard of greatness with us has always been ones inner, and not ones outside, possessions. All outer things come and go. Why should we run after those fleeting objects? We opted for a wealth which is the unique treasure of human life, which we can develop within ourselves “ the wealth of sound virtues, of perfect knowledge and of sublimity of the soul. That alone is real, that alone is abiding. Therefore, whereas the general mass of people in other countries have worshipped a great military hero or a mighty chieftain, we find in our land that even the great heroes and monarchs have worshipped the dust of the feet of half-naked sanyasins living in forests without a piece of cloth to call their own. Why? Because our way of looking at life, because of our realisation that the quality of the inner being alone is abiding and that it goes from life to life till it reaches the culmination of perfection.

Be Living, Dynamic Emblems

These are just a few basic features which go to make us real, positive Hindus. It is only when we pay special attention to them, imbibe them, manifest them in our life, and stand up as real, living and dynamic emblems of those glorious concepts that our taking birth in the divine Hindu heritage will not have been in vain.

Can we, then, say confidently that we are such real, positive Hindus? Let us ask ourselves. How do we live? What are the ideals before us? What are our feelings? Are we Hindus only by the force of circumstances or by accident of birth? Or because we have remained untouched by conversion to Islam or Christianity, as the proselytisers were very few and we were very large in numbers? Is that the only meaning of our being Hindus? There is no use merely saying "Oh! We have a great culture." What do we know of it? How do we practise it? Do we look at our individual life as an offering to society? Do we feel that we should not merely run after pelf and power but should hold aloft virtues in life? Do we feel that we should really be such men that as soon as anyone looks at us, he must be able to say, "Here is a man, who is seeking perfection in all that go to make a real human being?" Let us introspect on these lines and gradually assimilate all these distinctive Hindu traits so that we can stand before the world as positive, dynamic Hindus. Let us live up to our philosophy, our dharma, and all those great qualities, which have moulded our lives for countless generations.

Therefore, though the idea of organising the Hindu Society may appear to be very simple, it really means that first of all we should be keenly conscious in our day-to-day life of our Hindu heritage and should mould every little aspect of our life in keeping with those great traditional values. In all that we do, in our dress, in our behaviour and in all walks of our life, that stamp of positive

conviction should be vividly manifest. This is the prime responsibility that rests upon us.

Reactionary Hinduism

But, unfortunately, what do we see all around us today? Some are Hindus, not out of conviction, but out of reaction. To give an example, our workers once approached a prominent Hindu leader during the signature collection campaign demanding ban on the slaughter of cows. But they were greatly shocked to hear him saying, "What is the use of preventing the slaughter of useless cattle? Let them die. What does it matter? After all, one animal is as good as the other. But, since the Muslims are bent upon cow-slaughter, we should make this an issue. And so, I give you my signature." What does this show? We are to protect the cow not because the cow has been for ages an emblem of Hindu devotion but because the Muslims kill it! This is Hinduism born out of reaction, a kind of negative Hinduism.

There are some for whom, the term Hindu is of use only to serve political objectives. Because a Congressman or a Socialist or some X thinks in terms of composite culture, they stand up and say that they want a pure Hindu culture. Stranger than this is the cry of Hindu Communism! A person can either be a Hindu or a Communist. He cannot be both. It only means that those who shout about Hindu Communism know neither Communism nor Hinduism. This is all out of reaction. Once a gentleman asked me whether we are organising Hindus in order to counteract the various activities of the Muslims. I simply told him that even if Prophet Mohammed had not been born and Islam had not come into existence, we would have taken up this work just as we are doing it today, if we had found Hindus in the same disorganised, self-forgetful condition as at present. The positive conviction that this is my Hindu Rashtra, this is my dharma, this is my philosophy which I have to live and set up as standard for all

other nations to follow-well, this should be the solid basis for Hindu reoorganisation.

If, then, we are not to be mere political Hindu animals or Hindus out of reaction, we must live as Hindus by conviction, capable of expressing that conviction in all aspects of our day-to-day life. The mere propagation of Hindu thought in literature and newspapers takes us nowhere. For instance, Veer Savarkarji wrote a beautiful book Hindutva and Hindu Mahasabha based itself on that pure philosophy of Hindu Nationalism. But once, the Hindu Mahasabha passed a resolution that Congress should not give up its nationalist stand by holding talks with Muslim League but should ask Hindu Mahasabha to do that job! What does it mean? It only means that the hybrid nationalism of Congress was of the pure variety, whereas Hindu Mahasabha represented the Hindu counterpart of the rabidly communal, anti-national Muslim League! How did this strange perversion set in? Because, the deep-rooted conviction which would spontaneously evoke the ready affirmation "yes, this is Hindu Nation" under all conditions, even in dreams, was not there.

Things that Count

So, we say that we have to imbibe deep and positive samskars of our nationhood which shall not allow us to be swept off our feet by political or other considerations. It is no use to speak of Hindu Nationhood and the eminence of Hindu way of life without a corresponding life-pattern in our practical day-to-day behaviour.

One of our ancient customs is to get up early in the morning before sunrise. Once a sadhu described to me his early childhood, how his mother used to get up early in the morning and, while doing the normal household duties, would be reciting in her melodious voice various hymns describing the glory of the Divine Mother of the Universe, and how she would awaken him with

words invoking Her holy blessings. The Sadhu said, "Those holy words which I used to hear immediately after I woke up from my sleep went deep into my being, purified me, gave me faith and strength to resist all worldly temptations and devote myself to the service of the Mother". This is Hindu samskar. Let us thus mould our life with an attitude of discipline throughout the day, from morning till night. A Hindu is born to be trained in a life-long course of discipline and self-restraint, which purify and strengthen him to reach the Supreme Goal in life.

Let us not say that these are small things about which we need not worry. It is only such little things that go to discipline our life and give shape and strength to our character.

But, unfortunately what do we see at present? All such benevolent customs and codes of conduct are ridiculed as superstition. A revealing incident took place recently. A student had gone to America from our country. He stayed as a paying guest in one of the ordinary families there. On the first day, when he sat for meals at the table along with the members of the family, he immediately started serving himself. Then the lady of the house gently requested him to wait for a minute and explained that it was their custom to pray to God before taking food. Remember, that young man had gone from a land which is considered to be a land of spirituality, a land of God, to a land which is supposed to be a land of Mammon worship, a land of gross materialism. There is no doubt that it is this faith in God, this faith in religion that has given to the West, to a large extent, the strength to succeed in this world.

“Modernism”

We pride ourselves upon our spiritual tradition. But how are we actually living? What are our daily samskars? Is there any place for God in all our daily routine? Is there at least some place in our

homes where we can contemplate upon Him? Once an acquaintance of mine invited me to visit his newly built house. It was a well-furnished and in every sense a modern house. When he had finished showing me its special features, I just asked him, "Well, where is the devagriha? Have you no family deity, which your forefathers had worshipped and handed down to you?" My question came as a surprise to him. He replied apologetically, "Yes, yes, but I had forgotten all about it". After a few months, when I had gone to that place again, he specially invited me to his house saying that he had carried out my suggestion. I went there. He showed me a small almirah constructed in the triangular space under the staircase and all the chappals and shoes “ quite a number of them because their standard of life was quite high! “ of the family members neatly arranged over that almirah! He said with a sense of gratification, " I have just constructed this and kept our family-god here". I was horrified to see that. I only remarked, "Why not keep these chappals inside and worship them instead of defiling the deity?" Such is our modern progressive Hindu life!

Let us not forget that a Sri Rama, a Shivaji or a Vivekananda was not a product of this type of modernism. Shivaji was inspired by the ideals enshrined in a Ramayana and Mahabharata. It was his supreme devotion to our Hindu way of life coupled with his unparalleled organisational acumen which gave it a practical dynamic form, that made him a force which changed the entire course of our history. Right from the Vedic seers down to Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Ramatirtha and such other stalwarts of the modern age, all have left the impress of their inspiring personality on our people by their life of positive love and realisation of our age-old ideals. They could stand erect in spite of all adverse forces, speak to the world in challenging tones. To what a pitiable condition we, their children, have descended! We do not know even the a,b,c of the ideals which moved and moulded those heroic souls.

I know a young man who had gone to a foreign land on Government scholarship. There he was confronted with a number of queries by his friends and strangers about *atma, pranayama, Gita* and so many other Hindu ideas and ways of life. This young man was blissfully ignorant of all those things. He wrote to me about his difficulty. But what could I do? Could I give him postal training in *yogabhyasa*, in *samadhi*, in *pranayama* and in all such things? How humiliating, it is, that our so-called educated young men of this land do not have the least scent of the fundamentals of our own philosophy “ let alone their realising them in full!

Ideals in All Aspects

Then, let us look into the other aspects “ the aspect of our relation with the various spheres of contact with society, as for example, our family, our neighbourhood, our centres of education, our field of profession and so on. Has there been no distinctive contribution of the Hindu in all these spheres of life? On the contrary, it is the Hindu alone whose philosophy embraces the smallest as well as the widest spheres of human activity. To us, the family is the first stage of our self-expansion. Then, all the various duties that devolve upon us as family members, have to be gone through so as to keep the delicate ties of sweet affection and identity among the members of the family always in tact. As a son, as a brother, as a husband or in whatever relationship, let us uphold the noble Hindu ideal of a family man. It brings no credit to us if we say, "Oh, I am working for society, why should I bother about the family bonds?" Again, look at the great ideal characters of our land. Sri Rama, though in his teens, accompanied Vishwamitra to the forest to destroy the rakshasas according to the bidding of his father. Later, he gladly started for his fourteen years of forest sojourn only to preserve the sanctity of his fathers pledge. As a brother, what an intense affection he bore towards Lakshmana and others. He was an ideal son, an ideal brother, an ideal husband, an ideal friend, an ideal disciple and to his foes an ideal

enemy too “ all blended in one ideal Hindu manhood. So was Sri Krishna. What a source of joy and solace he was to Yashoda and Nanda! How he charmed the whole neighbourhood with his sweet behaviour!

Then, during our student life, acquiring knowledge and character, and not merely stuffing our brains with information, has been the constant urge with us. We are not to become mere bookworms. The one key to all learning is concentration of mind. With regular healthy habits for the body and for the mind, it should not be difficult for us to develop concentration. And then, in various educational institutions in which we study, we come in contact with our teachers and co-students. In the Hindu tradition the relationship between the teacher and the taught is not one of contract. It is something sublime “ the shishya looks up to the guru as the very embodiment of knowledge and divinity and behaves towards him in a spirit of humility and devotion.

Immediately this is said, there are today some who ask whether the present-day teachers are worthy of such devotion. But the students should not fall a prey to such a perverted outlook. Let us behave as we ought to; it is for our own good, for our own refinement. We worship the idol of Hanuman in the temple. After a time, by constant application the idol is thickly covered with sindhur and its shape is changed beyond all recognition. But still it is worshipped as Hanuman with the same devotion. The Deity of Learning is Vinayaka “ the Deity with a pot belly and an elephant head! But that does not affect ones devotion to Him. See the born Jagadguru Sri Krishna behaving like any ordinary pupil in the hermitage of Sandipani, and you get the true picture of an ideal Hindu student. He served his teacher with utmost love and devotion just like any other pupil. He went to forests in rain and storm to bring dry faggots for yajna. What was there for him, who was himself the very embodiment of knowledge, to learn?

And again, see him moving among his comrades and co-students. What a deep and pure love he had for all! Sudama, a poor Brahmin boy, was his classmate in Sandipanis ashrama. Later in life, when Sri Krishnas fame spread far and wide, Sudama once set out with torn clothes and a handful of beaten rice to see his old classmate. As soon as Krishna sighted his old friend he dashed forth and warmly embraced him to his bosom. He snatched the precious present that his friend had brought and ate it with great relish. He conferred upon Sudama immense riches also.

Even if, by chance, there is a conflict with our elders on points of ideology, our respectful behaviour towards them need not change. In the Mahabharata war, when Bhishma and Arjuna faced each other, Arjuna directed his first five arrows to the feet of Bhishma. The charioteer of Bhishma was amazed to see Arjunas unfailing arrows falling at Bhishmas feet instead of striking his chest. Bhishma said "My beloved Arjuna is prostrating before me with all his five pranas seeking my blessings".

"Swadarme Nidhanam Shreyah"

Let us not brush aside these examples as old puranic stories. In them are embedded the priceless gems of our culture, which once made the Hindu life the envy of the whole world. Nor are they to be discarded as having become impractical in these days. Even in this twentieth century, we do see such inspiring examples. There is the example of our own founder, Dr. Hedgewar. When he had once gone to Poona in connection with the organisational work, one of his old teachers at Poona was also invited to the elders meeting to be addressed by him. Many a leading light of the city had assembled for the meeting. The old teacher came a bit late. But as soon as Doctorji saw him, he got up and touched the old teachers feet and offered him his own seat.

These are only a few features of our present-day living on the background of our permanent values of life. It is only when a nation, just as an individual, sticks to its roots of swadharma that it grows and blossoms forth in all-round glory and achievement. Pulling out ones roots of swadharma and transplanting something else in its place will only result in utter chaos and degeneration. The Bhagawad-Gita says :

“Swadharme nidhanam shreyah paradharmo bhayaavahah”

(*Even death while performing ones own dharma brings blessedness; taking to anothers dharma is fraught with fearful consequences*)

The task of rekindling the Hindu way of life brushing off the ashes of self-forgetfulness and imitation covering the immortal embers of the age-old samskars in the Hindu heart so that pure flame of the National Self of this sacred land will once again blaze forth in all its effulgence, therefore, comes up before us as the call of National Swadharma.

8. Vision of Our Work

The ultimate vision of our work, which has been a living inspiration for all our organisational efforts, is a perfectly organised state of our society wherein each individual has been moulded into a model of ideal Hindu manhood and made into a living limb of the corporate personality of society.

Obviously, this is not a vision which can be realised within a few days or even a few years. It requires the untiring, silent endeavour of hundreds and thousands of dedicated missionaries. It requires stout and steady hearts, which shall remain unshaken amidst adversities and temptations. It is to mould such inspired lives that the Sangh lays utmost stress on day-to-day samskars, day-to-day inculcation of all those qualities of head and heart which go to foster strength and competence in the individual to march on the path of lifelong dedication.

The Short-cut Mania

This type of steady, silent and lifelong devotion to work may appear very strange and unusual in the present-day world. It has an originality and a freshness all its own. As such, people will naturally take some time to appreciate and assimilate this approach of ours. For instance, there are many who feel aghast at the idea that our method of work demands daily attendance at a particular hour, at a specified place, year after year, all through their lifetime. Once a young man requested me to guide him how he could develop his powers of concentration. In order to test his tenacity, I asked him to observe a particular practice regularly. Immediately he asked, "For how long am I to do this?" I said. "Well, continue it for all life". He exclaimed, "For all life! How is it possible to continue anything for all life?" I jocularly asked him, "At least will you stick to this principle all your life?"

That is the mentality of the day. People want quick results and short-cuts to success. This human frailty of minimum effort and maximum result has encompassed all fields of our national life. The path of honesty, which implies sincere, hard labour has yielded to means, foul or fair, which give quick results. The earning man thinks in terms of such short-cuts to become rich; and if he can become so overnight, he is prepared to descend to any level for that sake. He takes to black-marketing, speculation and gambling. He eagerly catches hold of an astrologer to see if any planet can do something for him! Stealing and robbing are, of course, there “ as the right royal short-cuts!

People have also begun to look out for short-cuts in realising God! Who will take all the trouble of undergoing lifelong penance and single-minded pursuit of God? They try to get hold of some saint or sanyasin as an intermediary agent who, they believe, will take over all their sins, give them his merit and leave them clean and pure to face God! No aspect of our social life is free from corrosion by this mean and ignoble attitude.

The Suicidal Lure

Because of such an atmosphere all around, people begin to think whether there are such short-cuts in the Sangh work also. They ask, "How long do you intend to carry on like this? When will you be able to bring about the total transformation of society that you visualise? For how many years more will you go on plodding the same path?" Then, they look around and see the mighty Government wielding vast powers and encompassing the whole expanse of national life. They begin to imagine that invested with such resources in administrative personnel, finance and authority, they can, within a short time, change the entire face of the country, and mould the coming generation on the pattern they desire through education and so on. They become enamoured of that short-cut involving less sacrifice and quick result. To a

superficial view, this argument, no doubt, appears very attractive. The all-out stress that is being laid on the political and economic aspect of our life by the present Government, the incessant propaganda carried on for their Five Year Plans, and the opening up of ever new fields of government control to suck up the young men of the country, have all added their share to the present-day attitude of our people to look up to political power as the panacea for all our ills.

But let us not be carried away by such a superficial view. Let us educate the people to acquire a deeper understanding of things, though unfortunately shallow thinking has become the order of the day. Once in Nagpur, there was an All India Education Conference. Some of the leading luminaries, who had come there were known to me. They told me about the details of their proceedings and the rules, curriculum, etc. they had decided upon. At last I asked them a simple question, "Can you tell me the real nature and real needs of the individual in our country whom you are planning to educate?" One of them confessed straightaway that this question was never posed before them. That is how things go on in our country, as in the story of the blind leading the blind, no one desiring or striving to get at the root of the problem.

Let us open the pages of world history and see if such a superficial view, such a short-cut means of state power will really help to build an immortal national life of a country. There were in the past so many empires pivoted wholly on political power. Persia, for example, entirely depended upon its emperor for all its security and prosperity. The emperor was the supreme head and controlled all aspects of peoples life including their religion. The people were for a time carefree and happy. But their entire national edifice crumbled at the very first shock of the Arab invasion. The same fate overtook the empires of Rome and Greece. It was not as if these empires had no wealth or good administration or armies. But all those things rested on the sandy

foundation of the political authority of the king and as soon as that political power was shattered even for a while, all their civilisation, their religion and their nationalism came down along with it in a crash, never to appear on the world stage again. Countries after countries lost their soul to Islam and became Muslim countries for ever in this fashion.

Secret of our Immortality

But the story of our nation presents an entirely different picture. Our society also had to face innumerable such invasions from the most barbaric races. Even political domination by these hostile forces over our people continued for a time, sometimes for several centuries. Off and on, forces of adharma reigned unleashing all their powers of destruction right from the days of Ravana. In that dark hour when Aurangzeb ruled, even a great martial saint like Samartha Ramadas was constrained to lament that an Incarnation of the Almighty alone could save Hindu Society from total annihilation. Later on, the wily Britishers also tried his hand at subverting our national life. Even today adharmic elements are having their heyday. But our society has survived all these grave crises. Again and again it has risen from the ashes, smashed the stranglehold of the evil forces and established the reign of righteousness. That glorious tradition continues unbroken to this day, charged as ever with the idealism and energy of resurgent nationalism. How did this miracle happen? What is the secret of the immortality, this deathless potency of our society, even after it was infected with the deadliest of poisons?

It is at once clear that the basis of our national existence was not political power. Otherwise, our fate would have been no better than that of those nations, which remain today as only museum exhibits. The political rulers were never the standard-bearers of our society. They were never taken as the props of our national life. Saints and sages, who had risen above the mundane

temptations of pelf and power and had dedicated themselves wholly for establishing a happy, virtuous and integrated state of society, were its constant torch-bearers. They presented the dharmasatta. The king was only an ardent follower of that higher moral authority. Many a kingship licked the dust owing to various adverse and aggressive forces. But the dharmasatta continued to hold the people together.

Ravana was a shrewd aggressor. He knew this secret of our social coherence. He was aware that the life-centre of our society throbbed in the forest hermitages of sages and seers. Therefore, he concentrated his attacks on those jungle huts, on the sacrificial rites that were carried on there. But those spiritual heroes braved those onslaughts and stuck to their mission of rousing and integrating the people. The whole of society and, it is said, even gods were groaning under the heels of Ravana. Then the nation roused itself in the personality of Sri Rama. That great saviour was moulded and guided by sages like Vishwamitra, Vasishtha and Agastya. Not only was Sri Rama set up, but intense national consciousness of the whole of society was kept ablaze by these sages through regular discourses, discussions and various dharmic rites. How alert, how diligent were these half-naked faqirs in their devotion to the welfare of society! Finally, even the deadly missile with which Sri Rama slew Ravana was given to him by the sage Agastya. It was because of their inspiration and untiring efforts that those lashing tides of adharma which had engulfed the three worlds were ultimately laid low. Once again society rose ever more effulgent from the ashes of Lanka, the citadel of those adharmic forces.

The Tradition Continues

Even during the days of Muslim domination great saints and sanyasins rose to continue that tradition. All those stalwarts “ Chaitanya, Tulsidas, Surdas, Jnaneshwar, Ramananda, Tukaram,

Ramanuja, Madhwa, Nanak and a host of such others “ flooded the land from one end to the other with religious devotion. Samartha Ramadas converted that religious fervour into a dynamo of national power. They recited stories of Sri Rama and Sri Krishna, sang the divine ballads of their heroism, roused the peoples faith in their gods and goddesses and kept up their moral calibre unimpaired amidst all the political oppression. The great national renaissance under Chhatrapati Shivaji was the direct outcome of those years of intense spiritual and cultural awakening. Prior to that also, the glorious Hindu power of Vijayanagar rose on the spiritual-cum-national awakening set in by Swami Vidyaranya. The great religious Guru Nanak and his successors laid the foundation of the Hindu upheaval exhibiting itself in the warlike Sikhs under Guru Govind Singh and Banda Bairagi. Thus, once again, the great national consolidation centered round dharma and the vicious, anti-national forces were put to rout and the flag of national victory flown triumphantly from Attok to Cuttack and from Kashmir to Kanyakumari.

We see the same spiritual content present in the national resurgence against the foreign yoke of the British also. The spiritual sun broke forth in all its glory in Bengal as the Sri Ramakrishna-Vivekananda order, in the Punjab in the form of Swami Dayananda and Ramatirtha, in the South Maharshi Ramana and Yogi Aurobindo “ all of whom infused the spiritual content of nationalism in to the peoples mind.

This is the unmistakable evidence of history before us. We have to take a lesson from that and decide to build the organised life of our people imbued with pure character and unflinching devotion to cultural and spiritual values, which shall stand unshaken for thousands of years to come. The power of the organised life of the people imbued with the spiritual urge of our ancient heritage “ well, that has been the secret of our immortality down these ages.

That is verily our Rashtradharma and we stand committed to rejuvenating it in its full potency.

Here it is necessary to clear a misconception that has clouded our thinking these days. When words like dharma and spirituality are uttered, pat comes the remark : "Why do you bring religion into politics?" This question stems from a misunderstanding of our concept of dharma and confusing it with the Western concept of religion. The Western countries suffered for centuries because of their dogmatic concept of religion and the control of state by the church. Our concept of dharma is as different from that as cheese is from chalk. Dharma or spirituality is not a dogma but a view of life in its totality. It is not a separate sphere of national life just as political or economic spheres Spirituality is, in our view, a comprehensive vision of life that should inform and elevate and correlate all fields of society for the fulfilment of human life in all its facets. It is the sap of our national tree, the life-breath of our national entity.

Power Corrupts

Even after understanding all this, there are some who feel that political power is essential even to spread our dharmic ideology . In the past, Christianity and Islam, they say, spread far and wide because of the political power they wielded. But on a closer study, we will find that ultimately political power will never solve the problem. For instance, the Government and most of the people were ranged against that single individual, Jesus Christ. After he was crucified on the cross, his disciples had no one to guide them. But their hearts were charged with idealism. Fired with the spirit of Christ, with the faith and zeal of their new realisation, they spread far and wide in the world. And the world bowed at their feet. Then they had no political power. But when, in course of time, their successors fell a prey to the lure of political power, corruption and degradation entered their ranks. The present plight

of Christianity, rendered powerless to mould the life of it own Christian countries and even made a tool in the hands of imperialistic political powers, is the direct outcome of the pollution of their ranks with political ambition. The perversion of Islam at the hands of its power-drunk followers “ miscalled the spread of Islam “ is too well known. It had nothing to do with the awakening of the spiritual values of life.

Why go so far? The present leaders of Congress were at one time men of great sacrifice and patriotism. The people also were inspired to follow the path of virtue because of their glowing examples. But what is their fate today? Corruption, nepotism and lust for power have become rampant in their ranks. That is why Gandhiji had advised Congress on the advent of swaraj either to disband itself or strictly keep itself aloof from power. But his wholesome advice was too bitter a pill to swallow for his followers who had tasted the spoils of power. And today we see its dire result, not only for Congress but for the whole country as well.

The latest experiment in Russia to achieve social good through the sole agency of state power has also given the same verdict. The statement "power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely" has become true to a letter there. Once power is acquired, the desire to retain it at all costs takes hold of the persons who wield that power. Their attitude towards the people will then be one of "I am the master, and you are my slaves". That is what has happened in Russia. Revolutionary zeal, wealth and power and its resultant intoxication, have all combined to make it a ruthless dictatorship, enslaving and dehumanising a whole nation.

Considered from this other aspect also, we come to the same conclusion that the type of organisation that we are building “ keeping ourselves aloof from lures and tentacles of political

power, but at the same time alert and powerful enough to check the erring powers that be " can alone give a healthy and permanent order in which our society can live and prosper. After all, political power is an external appliance, which cannot by itself mould the inner man after an ideal. Mere governmental legislation cannot mould the minds of men on the lines of virtue. If a person in authority legislates, say, against drinking and if he himself is given to drinking, he will only show greater cleverness in circumventing that very law.

Thus it is very clear that mere political authority becomes powerless when it has to play the role of rejuvenating the cultural values and social solidarity; and much worse, if left to itself, it corrupts those high standards. The secret of immortality of a nation conserving the noblest of its traditional qualities has to be sought elsewhere; and the functions of the state would have to be specified and its powers restrained within certain limits.

Restraints on Power

It is with such a deep understanding of the various factors of social life that our ancient lawgivers confined the function of the state to the protection of the people against foreign invasions and internal strifes caused by jealousy, hatred, aggrandisement, etc. A state, which transgresses these limits, they said, cannot be the friend of the people. It becomes their enemy. For, it will not allow the free growth of the eternal potentialities of the people. That would also degrade them by making them relegate to the background the higher values of life, in a bid to please the powers that be.

Today our Government, calling itself a Welfare State, is trying to centralise all power and authority and secure undivided control of education, medical aid, social reforms, production, distribution and many other spheres of life. If the state were thus to dominate

the whole range of human activity, the individual will exist only as a slave bereft of all initiative. It is well known that power tends to make its wielder oppressive and tyrannical. Men in authority, therefore, strive to suppress their potential opponents through violence, thereby rendering themselves incapable of securing the peaceful progress and welfare of the people. Our lawgivers, therefore, thought it is necessary to impose strong checks on the men in power. They ordained that governmental power, which is only a means, should not become the end. The state could do good to society only so long as it remained as the upholder of dharma " the higher law of the good life " and not as an end in itself. They, therefore, placed our rulers under the guidance and control of the dharmic authority in the form of selfless and disinterested persons-the sages and seers living in hermitages.

One more unique feature incorporated in our ancient national set-up was the precaution taken to keep political power aloof from the production of wealth. Money is a form of power. It does not need much intelligence to imagine the havoc the state can create once it becomes inflated by a combination of political and economic powers. Concentration of both these powers in the hands of the same individual or group must either degrade and enslave society or provoke the people to revolt when their suffering becomes unbearable. Whatever the outcome, the loss of social stability, progress and prosperity becomes inevitable.

The Lesson of Europe

The example of European countries is revealing. Prior to the French Revolution, the king was the repository of all political and economic powers in those countries. The people were groaning under the despotic kingship, squeezed out of all liberty, initiative and happiness. The French Revolution erupted with the trumpet cry of liberty, equality and fraternity as a violent revolt against that tyranny. By about the same time, the Industrial Revolution

had also set in. Under the slogan equality of opportunity, persons with greater intelligence, capacity and money monopolised the industries, amassed enormous wealth, and on that strength controlled political power as well. They became the new tyrants in place of the old. The combination of political and economic powers once again bred despotism and the common man was reduced to conditions of indescribable misery and slavery, though under the new and enchanting garb of democracy. As Bernard Shaw observed, democracy was born as a result of the absence of a benevolent despot.

This imbalance in social set-up and the consequent popular unrest caused another outburst in the form of Communist revolution. The bloody revolutions that took place in Russia and China have probably no parallel in the history of the world for their sheer magnitude of massacres, purges, transportations, slave camps and such other inhuman measures. Again, the same tragedy of the combination of political and economic powers has overtaken the Communist countries landing the general mass of people in inhuman slavery. Countries, which have forestalled the Communist revolution and remained democratic could do so by weaning away to some extent at least the political power from the clutches of economic power. However, even in these democratic countries, a beneficial balance between the two has not been achieved so far.

Therefore in order to avoid slavery or bloody revolution and provide enduring peace and freedom to society, our ancient Hindu thought and practice had kept economic power away from the hands of the state. It deprived the people producing wealth of all political power. The two powers were thus kept interdependent and mutually corrective. And above all, these two powers were subjected to the supervision of such selfless men as had no axe to grind. It was the continuous tradition of such persons, holding the sceptre of spiritual authority, who were ever on the alert to undo

any injustice perpetrated by any of these two powers, while they themselves remained above all temptations of power or riches, that formed the real breath of the glory and immortality of our ancient nation.

Building Social Omnipotence

It is after realising this key-note of our national tradition that we have taken upon ourselves the none-to-easy path of moulding men imbued with an uncompromising spirit of dedication to the nation and its spiritual values, who, on the strength of their all-embracing love and spotless character, will be able to wield the integrated strength of the society to such an intense degree that the political powers that be shall not dare to transgress their limits and use power for ends other than social welfare. An organisation of such men alone can form the true basis of eternal social power-an organisation which can rise above the flux of circumstances, which is not inspired by the aim of serving petty interests or capturing political power, an organisation which is identified with the whole of society, sustaining by its very existence the entire social edifice and providing spontaneous impulse and energy for its full self-development.

Having, as we do, this sublime vision engraved in our hearts, why should we run after the mirage of political power? Once in the Dakshineshwar temple there was a theft. Some of the ornaments of the idol of Radhakanta were stolen. When some one made the remark "What is this God who cannot protect His own ornaments?" Sri Ramakrishna rebuked him saying that it was shameful to entertain such absurd views for, what value can He attach to such worthless pieces of stone and metal Who has Lakshmi, the Goddess of Wealth, as his handmaid? Similarly, why should we, who have the integrated vision of the entire national life, run after a fleeting thing like political power?

Political power shall only reflect the radiance of culture, integrity and power of the organised society that we want to build up-just as the moon reflects the radiance of the sun. We aspire to become the radiating centre of all the age-old cherished ideals of our society-just as the indescribable power, which radiates through the sun. Then, the political power, which draws its life from that source of society, will have no other go but to reflect the same radiance.

There is a story in the Upanishads, which beautifully expresses this idea. Once, it appears, the gods became swollen-headed owing to their victory over the demons. The Almighty thought it time to subdue their inflated ego. He assumed a colossal body and suddenly appeared before them. The gods were taken aback to see that strange apparition. The god of wind, Vayu, was sent to find out who that figure was. That figure calling himself Yaksha, placed a blade of grass in front of Vayu and challenged him to move it. Vayu with all his world-shaking powers failed to move it even by a hair-breadth. He returned exasperated. Then the god of fire, Agni, went. He also returned humiliated having failed to burn that little blade of grass. Finally, the king of gods, Indra, himself went to see him, but that strange figure disappeared all of a sudden. Indra also returned feeling ashamed at his inability to unravel that mystery. Then it was brought home to his mind that the Yaksha was the Almighty Himself through Whose grace each of them received a spark of His power.

Stick to National Genius

That is the grand ideal we have envisaged-the building up of the omnipotent power of the people which shall eternally sustain the society amidst all the vicissitudes of external factors and vivify and irradiate all fields of our national life.

Remember that the ancient spirit is not dead. That race spirit, which has survived all the shocks of centuries of aggression and has time and again thrown up great spiritual and national heroes, is bound to reassert itself. Let us fashion our life on the pattern on those ancient torch-bearers, those cultural luminaries of our land. Let us revive that glorious tradition which produced a Vasishtha, a Vishwamitra, a Chanakya, a Vidyaranya and a Samartha, that blossomed forth in a Sri Rama, a Chandragupta, a Krishnadevaraya and a Shivaji.

Let us stand like a rock on this conviction amidst all the tempo of outside propaganda for short-cuts and distractions of political lures. Let us remain true to our dream of reinstating our Bharat Mata as the Cultural Guide of the world, by making our people once again take to the path of our national genius. It is only when we stand up to this conviction unshaken like the great Himalayas that holy streams like Ganga and Yamuna of true national resurgence and cultural values will flow from us. Let that sublime vision continue to stir our hearts forever and let us prepare ourselves for that historic mission, regardless of the time and energy that we may be required to dedicate.

PART TWO

THE NATION & ITS PROBLEMS



9. Our Motherland

THE GRAND VISION

This is our sacred land, Bharat, a land whose glories are sung by the gods-

"Gayanti devah kila geetakani
Dhanayaastu te Bharata bhumibhage
Svargaapvargaaspadahetubhute
Bhavanti bhooyah purushaah suratvat"

(The men born in the land of Bharat, the gateway to heavens and salvation, are more blessed than the gods themselves-so sing the gods.)

-a land visualised by Mahayogi Aurobindo as the living manifestation of the Divine Mother of the universe, the Jaganmata, the Adishakti, the Mahamaya and the Mahadurga, Who has assumed concrete form to enable us to see Her and worship Her,

-a land eulogised by our philosopher-poet Rabindranath Tagore as:

"Devi bhuvana manamohini…….
Neelasindhujaladhautacharanatal"

(The enchanting Goddess of the world.. Her feet washed by the blue waters of the oceans),

-a land saluted by the inspired poet of freedom, Bankim Chandra, in his immortal song Vande Mataram, which spurred thousands of young hearts to cheerfully ascend the gallows in the cause of her liberty, as

"Tvam hi Durgaa dashapraharanadharineem"

(Thou art the Great Destroyer armed with ten weapons),
-a land worshipped by all our seers and sages as Matrubhoomi, Dharmabhoomi, Karmabhoomi and punyabhoomi, a veritable Devabhoomi and Mokshabhoomi,
-a land which has been to us since hoary times the beloved and sacred Bharat Mata whose very name floods our hearts with waves of pure and sublime devotion to her,

-well, this is the mother of us all, our glorious motherland.

Motherland-Ancient Concept

In fact, the very name Bharat denotes that this is our mother. In our cultural tradition, the respectful way of calling a woman is by her childs name. To call a lady as the wife of Mr. so-and-so or as Mrs. so-and-so is the Western way. We say, "She is Ramus mother". So also is the case with the name Bharat for our motherland. Bharata is an elder brother of ours, born long long before us. He was a noble, virtuous and victorious king and a shining model of Hindu manhood. When a woman has more than one child, we call her by the name of her eldest or the most well known among her children. Bharata was well known and this land was called as his mother, Bharat, the mother of all Hindus.

But there are persons who say that Hindus did not know what motherland was, that they were all divided into various warring clans, that patriotism, i.e., devotion to one single motherland, was unknown to them and if at all they were to a certain extent devoted, it was only to certain fragments of the land and not to the country as a whole from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari, as we obtain it at present. Even leading persons of the day often declare that ours is a continent or a sub-continent having various climates and various kinds of soil with a conglomeration of nations and

therefore unfit to be called a single country. How did these queer notions creep into our national mind?

It was the wily foreigner, the Britisher, who to achieve his ulterior imperialistic motives, set afloat all such mischievous notions among our people so that the sense of patriotism and duty towards the integrated personality of our motherland was corroded. He carried on an insidious propaganda that we were never one nation, that we were never the children of the soil, but mere upstarts having no better claims than the foreign hordes of the Muslims or the British over this country. The misfortune is that the so-called educated of this land were taken in by this ruse.

But the fact is, long before the West had learnt to eat roast meat instead of raw, we were one nation, with one motherland.

"Prathivyaah samudraparyantaayaah Ekarat"

(Over all the land up to the oceans, one nation) is the trumpet cry of the Vedas. Asetu-Himachal " from the Setu to the Himalayas- has had been our clear concept down these ages. Long ago our forefathers sang:

"Uttram yat samudrasya himaadreschaiva dakshinam
Varsham tad Bharatam naama Bharati tatra santatih"

(The land to the north of the oceans and south of the Himalayas is called Bharatavarsha, and Bharatis are her children.)

The Great Himalayas

The entire Himalayas with all their branches and sub-branches extending to the North, South, East and West, with the territories included in these great branches, have been ours-not merely the

Southern lap of the mountains. It is sheer practical common sense-apart from religious or other sentiments-that no powerful and wise nation would make the top of the mountains its boundary. That would be suicidal. Our ancestors had instituted some of our places of pilgrimage on the northern side of the Himalayas making those regions our live boundary. Tibet, i.e., Trivishtap-now called a Chinese province by our leaders!-was the land of gods and Kailas , the abode of Parameshwara, the Supreme Lord. Manasarovar was another holy centre of pilgrimage looked upon as the source of our sacred rivers like Ganga, Sindhu and Brahmaputra.
Kalidasa, our great national poet, has described the Himalayas as:

"Astyuttarasyaam dishi devataatma
Himaalayo naama nagaadhiraajah
Poorvaapau toyanidheevagahya
Sthitah Prathivya iva maanadandah"

(At the North is the divine Himalayas, the King of mountains, stretching its arms to the ocean on the east and west and standing as the measuring rod of the earth.)

Chanakya, who has been held an authority on our political science, has stated:

"Himavatsamudraantamudeecheenam
Yojansahasraparimaanam"

(To the north of the oceans up to the Himalayas, the country is 1000 yojanas in length.)
That only means, the poet Kalidasas description tallies with the statesman Chanakyas statement in giving us a fairly correct picture of the vastness of our motherland.

The Grand picture

Our epics and our puranas also present us with the same expansive image of our motherland. Afghanistan was our ancient Upaganasthan. Shalya of the Mahabharata came from there. The modern Kabul and Kandahar were Gandhar from where Kauravas mother Gandhari came. Even Iran was originally Aryan. Its previous king Reza Shah Pehlavi was guided more by Aryan values than by Islam. Zend Avesta, the holy scripture of Parsis, is mostly Atharva Veda. Coming to the east, Burma is our ancient Brahmadesha. The Mahabharata refers to Iraavat, the modern Irrawady valley, as being involved in that great war. It also refers to Assam as Pragjyotisha since the sun first rises there. In the South, Lanka has had the closest links and was never considered as anything different from the mainland.

It was this picture of our motherland with the Himalayas dipping its arms in the two seas, at Aryan (Iran) in the West and at Sringapur (Singapore) in the East, with Sri Lanka (Ceylon) as a lotus petal offered at her sacred feet by the Southern Ocean, that was constantly kept radiant in peoples mind for so many thousands of years. Even to this day a Hindu while taking his daily bath invokes the sacred rivers right from Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, Saraswati, Narmada and Sindhu to Cauvery.

“Gange cha Yamune chaiva Godavari Sarasvati
Narmade Sindhu Kaveri jalesmin sannidhim kuru”

This is also a lesson in devotion, because we are made to feel that even a drop of water from these holy rivers has the potency of wiping out all our sins.

One of the greatest personalities who have left an indelible stamp upon character and culture of our people is Sri Ramachandra. His

great qualities like tranquillity, catholicity, depth of knowledge and feelings are held comparable to the immeasurable depth and serenity of the ocean, and his indomitable valour and fortitude are compared to the great and invincible Himalayas-

"Samudra iva gaambheerye Dhairyena Himavaniva"

Do we not know that our motherland is bounded on one side by the Himalayas and the rest of the three sides by the ocean ? The entire motherland has been thus visualised in its fullness in the ideal personality of Sri Rama. Various are the ways in which this motherland of ours has been set forth as an object of worship, whole and integrated. Any idea of fragmentation has been intolerable to us.

The Chosen Land

The entire land to us is tapobhoomi. There is an illuminating incident in our ancient literature. A question was once raised as to which land was pure and holy for practising tapas and performing sacrifices so as to bear proper fruit, and which was the ideal place for the realisation of the Ultimate Reality. The answer given there is, the land where Krishnasara-mriga is found is the only suitable land for that purpose. Any student of zoology can tell you that this particular type of deer is to be found only in our country and nowhere else in the world. What does it show? Our forefathers were of the conviction that throughout the world this is the holiest of the lands where the least merit will bear fruit a hundred or thousand-fold. Swami Vivekananda has said, "If there is any land on this earth that can lay claim to be the blessed Punyabhoomi, to be the land to which every soul that is wending its way Godward must come to attain its last home, it is Bharat."

This is verily the chosen land of God Realisation. This is not mere sentimental effusion, but our deep-rooted conviction. Some years ago our newspapers had flashed the story of a German who came to our land as a spiritual aspirant. He embraced sanyas and underwent the stern austerities of an all-renouncing ascetic. But even after prolonged penance he could not realise God. On a searching self-enquiry he was convinced that his body, born and bred in the passionate climate of the West, was unfit for God Realisation. He therefore went to Haridwar and gave up his body in the holy Ganga. He left a note stating, "I am giving up the body of my own accord. May the offering of my body in the sacred waters of Ganga merit me with a rebirth in Bharat and with that new chaste body I may be able to realise God."

We come to the same conclusion regarding this special feature of our motherland if we study the lives of the founders of the various other faiths and sects in the world. Even in the case of the great saint, Jesus Christ, nowhere is there any reference that he had actually seen God. He had only come across angels and once Satan. When put on the Cross, he was even tormented for a moment by a doubt regarding the mercy of God and he exclaimed, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

The founder of Islam, too, was a powerful man. He could unite those people, torn asunder by feuds and factions, and roused in them the urge and the organised power to build empires. But even he met only Gabriel and felt he heard some divine voices, that is all. He did not see God face to face.

It was given to the great sons of this soil to see and realise God in His full effulgence. At a time when other races had not yet emerged from their caves and forests, the Vedic Rishis addressed mankind as the children of Immortal Bliss-

"Srunvantu vishve amritasya putraah
Aaye dhaamani divyaani tasthuh"

and declared in thundering tones:

"Vedaahametam purusham mahaantam
Aadityavarnam tamasah parastaat
Tameva viditvaa atimrutyumeti
Naanyah panthaa vidyateyanaaya"

(I have seen that Great One, Iustrous and beyond all darkness. Having known Him, man is emancipated from the cycle of birth and death, there is no other way to final salvation.)

There is no parallel in the rest of the world literature to these expressions for their supreme self-confidence and self-realisations. Again nowhere else can you find the parallel of a Sri Krishna who speaks in the first person I as God Himself in His immortal soul-stirring call to mankind-the Bhagavad-Gita.

Tradition Continues

Nor is this unique feature of our land confined to ancient tradition only. Even in modern times there is the instance of Narendras (later, Swami Vivekananda) historic meeting with Sri Ramkrishna. As a young and brilliant college student, he had already dived deep into the philosophies of the East and the West. But his questioning spirit was not satisfied. He met various learned and pious men of his time. Even they could not quench his spiritual thirst. He came to know that there was a paramahamsa (liberated soul) in the temple of Dakshineswar. He went to him and bluntly posed him the question that had haunted him for years: "Sir have you seen God?" Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa replied without a moments hesitation: " Yes, I see

Him just as I see you here, only in a much more intense degree. And I can show Him to you also." And Sri Ramakrishna fulfilled his promise to Narendra.

As we know, Narendra was a modern young man with a towering intellect and tremendous will-power. He was not the type to be mesmerised or hypnotised into blindly believing things. But he could not help being convinced about the reality of God when brought face to face with God Himself. Such is the living tradition of men of God, who have continuously held aloft the name of our land as the land of God Realisation, as Dharmabhoomi, as Mokshabhoomi.

No wonder that such a land with divinity ingrained in every speck of its dust, has been to us the holiest of the holy, the centre of our utmost devotion. And this devotion is felt for the whole of the land and not for any fraction of it. The worshipper of Shiva goes from Kashi to Rameshwaram, and the devotee of Vishnu in His various forms and Incarnations travels the whole length and breadth of this country. If he is an advaiti, the four ashrams of Shankaracharya standing as sentinels beckon him to the four corners of the country. If he is a Shakta, the worshipper of Shakti-the Divine Mother of the Universe-fifty-two are the places of his pilgrimage spreading from Hingula in Baluchistan to Kamakhya in Assam and Jwalamukhi in Himachal Pradesh to Kanyakumari in the South. It only means that this land is the divine manifestation of the Mother of the Universe.

The Divine Mother

Nothing can be holier to us than this land. Every particle of dust, everything living or non-living, every stock and stone, tree and rivulet of this land is holy to us. To keep this intense devotion ever alive in the heart of every child of this soil, so many procedures and conventions were established here in the past. The

various religious rites invariably included a description of the spot in relation to the entire expanse of Bharatavarsha-

“Jambudweepe Bharatavarshe Bharatakhande”

All our important religious ceremonies start with bhoomi-poojan-worship of earth. There is a custom that as soon as a Hindu wakes up in the morning, he begs forgiveness of the Mother Earth because he cannot help touching Her with his feet throughout the day.

“Samudravasane Devi parvatastanamandale
Vishnupatni namastubhyam paadasparsham kshamsva me”

(O Mother, the Divine Consort of Almighty, with ocean as Thy embroidery and mountains as Thy breasts, forgive me for touching Thee with my feet.)

A simple act indeed, but it brings home to our minds every morning the idea of devotion for this motherland as the sublimated devotion to the Divine Mother. This training has gone so deep that even in ordinary day-to-day affairs we often come across a flash of that realisation. When a child at play tramples on the ground, the mother says, "Do not kick the Mother Earth, dear child." Or if a nail is driven into the earth wantonly, she says, "Oh, no! Dear child, Mother will be pained. " An ordinary farmer, too, before applying the plough to the soil, prays for a pardon. Such is our living tradition.

Never, never has our land been dead inanimate matter, but always the living divine mother to all her children-the lowliest and the greatest.

Swami Vivekananda, when about to leave England for Bharat, was asked what he thought of his motherland after having visited the luxuriant countries of the West like America and England. He said, "Bharat, I loved before. But now every particle of dust in Bharat is extremely holy. It has become a place of pilgrimage for me."

There is one more touching instance of Swamiji when he returned to our motherland after his triumphant tour of the West. A vast assembly of our countrymen eagerly awaited to offer a heros welcome to him. When the Swamiji alighted from the ship and stepped on the Southern shores, a thunderous ovation greeted him. However, the people were amazed to see Swamiji prostrating on the ground and showering his body with the dust of the soil. To the surprised query of some one, Swamiji explained: "My body has been so long in the materialistic countries of the West and hence has become contaminated. I am therefore purifying myself with the dust of this holy soil."

And his guru Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa once severely admonished a person who was going to Ganga to wash himself after answering natures call. He said, "How unbecoming of you to pollute the divine waters of Ganga-Gangavari brahmavari-with your dirt!"

Such has been the living realisation of the glorious motherhood of our land inculcated by her great sons, which has permeated into all strata of our people.

She has been, in fact, the central theme of our national life all through. She has nourished us as the mother with her soil, air and water and all the various necessary objects for our sustenance and happiness. Like a father she has arranged protection to us through impregnable Himalayas in the north, and mountain ranges like Aravali, Vindhya and Sahyadri interspersed all over the country

that afforded our freedom-fighters protection and shelter in the past. And she has acted as our spiritual preceptor too in her capacity as Dharmabhoomi and Mokshabhoomi. Verily, our motherland has been a mother, a father and a teacher-mata, pita and guru “ all rolled in to one.

Wanted Heroic Devotion

Limits of intellectualism-Mother concept; sign of evolution- Two aspects of devotion-Heroic devotion alone counts-Fruits of not a blade of grass grows mentality-Political boundaries decided by nations will-power.

There are some very eminent luminaries in our country, who declare with an air of omniscience, "What is this so-called motherland, except stones and clay!" Such persons feel that intellect is everything. According to their intellectual reasoning, a country is after all a stretch of inanimate, inert territory. However, even intellectual reasoning has its own limits. For instance, the human body is after all material. The body of ones mother also is as much material as any other womans body. Then, why should any one consider his mother as different from other women? Why have devotion for her? An intellectual has no answer for this.

Take another instance. The human body requires for its nourishment starch, protein, fat salt, and water. And these food-contents are readily available in human flesh in the requisite proportion. After all, biologically, man is nothing but flesh, blood and bones. So, why not eat up our neighbor? But if a person says this, he may be called a scholarly logician, but certainly not a civilised human being. Such intellectualism leads only to cannibalism. Ravana was a scholar, but a barbarian all the same. Therefore, mere intellect is not enough. Man must be capable of experiencing the nobler sentiments of the heart.

Blossoming of Mother Concept

Now, how did this concept of mother blossom from out of stones and clay? We know that as living species evolve and progress, they begin to invoke the sentiments of mother in those things, animate or inanimate, which feed and nourish them. Take a frog or a snake, for example. They have no idea of mother at all. They are also not aware as to what happens to their offspring. Neither the offspring nor the mother look upon each other in that relationship. Gradually, as life evolves, We come to mammals where the mother feeds her young ones in their childhood. Birds take care of their eggs and the small ones until they become strong enough to fly about. When the usefulness of the mother is no more felt, the offspring forget their mother and thereafter they are entire strangers to one another. Man is supposed to be at the top in the scale of evolution. If he is cultured, his love and adoration for his mother continues even after she ceases to be physically useful to him. In fact, he will serve and revere her all the more, if she becomes very old, blind and bodily out of use.

As human life evolves, the concept of mother also takes a wider and more sublime form. When man looks around with his discerning intellect, He sees so many other things to which he owes a debt of gratitude. He begins to look upon them also as mother. He sees the rivers, which give him food and water. He calls them mother. Once he outgrows the use of his mothers milk, he sees the cow, which feeds him with her milk throughout his life. He calls her mother-cow. And then he reaches the state of understanding that it is the mother soil which nourishes him, protects him and takes him in her bosom after he breathes his last. He becomes conscious that she is his great mother. Thus to look upon ones land of birth as mother is a sign of a high state of human evolution. The Vedas declare:

“Maata Bhumih putroham Pruthivyaah”

(The Earth is my mother,I am her child.)

Make Devotion Dynamic

Therefore, it is up to us to keep aglow that highly evolved concept of divine motherhood towards our land. Now, how are we to express our devotion to her? There are two ways. The one is the formal method of worshiping with flowers, lights, chanting of hymns, etc. Our people have been doing this even today in a sprit of religious devotion. They go round the country on pilgrimage, follow the religious injunctions, recite hymns, worship and offer flowers and take bath in the various holy rivers. They do all this with the sole purpose of acquiring personal religious merit. This is in a way the passive aspect of devotion.

The dynamic aspect of devotion is to manifest in practical national life a spirit of readiness to sacrifice our all for the protection of the freedom and honour of every speck of this motherland. It is this active manifestation that counts in this hard matter-of“fact world. A heart fired with such devotion can never tolerate the slightest affront to the object of its devotion, i.e., the motherland. It takes on a terrible form and rests not till the aggressive elements responsible for the insult no more remain in a position to commit the sacrilege a second time. A divine discontent to undo all the past insults and humiliations burns in such a heart.

Without this dynamic, conquering spirit, even devotion to a divine cause will be of little avail. In this hard world which is an arena for trial of strength with brute forces, mere goodness or noble virtues, i.e., the passive aspect of sattva, will not hold the field even for a single moment. That is why we find that in spite of all

the piety, goodness and devotion to God all through the past thousand years, we were trampled under the feet by foreign aggressors who, though total strangers to goodness and virtue, had a passion for heroic action and organised effort, i.e., full of rajas. Our history also bears witness to the fact whenever our people became charged with the conquering spirit-charged with the dynamic aspect of sattva-then all those demonic empires of the enemy were reduced to a shambles.

That is also the lesson of our puranas which depict the stories of the struggle between devas(gods) and rakshasas(demons). We often see devas, in spite of their divinity, being beaten down by the organised and aggressive rakshasas. And it was only when the devas roused themselves to heroic action that they could triumph over the rakshasas. It is activity, dynamism and heroism that rule the world. Indeed, "veerabhogya vasundhara" (This Earth is for the valiant) sums up the philosophy of a successful life in this world.

Are We Alive?

Is this fiery and heroic aspect of devotion to our motherland alive in our hearts today? If that spirit had been there in our leaders and in our common folk, could Partition have taken place? Would they not have risen uncompromisingly, heroically as one man against all such machinations of the British and the Muslim, prepared to shed their last drop of blood for maintaining the scared integrity of the motherland? Alas, that did not happen. On the contrary, people, led by the leaders, were busy in celebrations on the advent of so-called independence!

There are some who tell us, "Bygones are bygones. What is the use of raking up old dead issues? After all, Partition is now a settled fact." How is this ever possible? How can a son forget and sit idle when the sight of his mutilated mother stares him in the

face every day? Forget? No true son can ever forget or rest till she becomes once again her complete whole. If Partition is a settled fact, we are here to unsettle it. There is, in fact, no such thing as a settled fact in this world. Things get settled or unsettled solely by the will of man. And mans will is steeled by a spirit of dedication to a cause, which he knows to be righteous and glorious.

There are some others who justify Partition saying, "After all, Hindus and Muslims are brothers. Partition is just a brotherly division of their property." But have we never heard of children cutting up their mother saying that she is their common property? What depths of depravity! Motherland has verily become an object of bargaining, only a land of enjoyment, Bhogabhoomi, just like a hotel, and not a Dharmabhoomi, Karmabhoomi and Punyabhoomi. The tearing away of the limbs of our mother and the gory blood-bath of millions and millions of our kith and kin is the price that we have paid for that ignoble attitude. Even today the tragedy of Partition has not come to a close. Kashmir has been partitioned. And now it appears Nagaland is well on the way.

Fruits of Not a Blade of Grass Grows Mentality

Our country is not wanting in people who lightly say, well, give it up, whenever there is an aggression or even a threat of aggression on parts of our motherland. If the Chinese occupy portions of Ladakh, they say, "Let it go. Not a blade of grass grows there." Some time back a subtle propaganda was carried on about NEFA insinuating that it was a godforsaken place, unfit for human habitation, infested with poisonous snakes and leeches which would go into the throats of our army officers and suck their blood! Even our newspapers, on which lies the responsibility of educating the people and inculcating in them a spirit of burning patriotism, gave it publicity which could only create disgust for our own territory in the minds of our people.

The same story has been repeated in the case of the Rann of Kutch. Along with the shocking news of the invasion and occupation by Pakistan of strategic points of that area, disparaging descriptions of that area also began to appear in our papers. Even the Central Governments brochure on the subject describes it as a desert where not a blade of grass grows, that it is useless for most part of the year being submerged under sea-water, and is so much infested with flies that one cannot drink a cup of water without swallowing some flies also along with it, and so on.

The close parallel in the description of NEFA and the Rann of Kutch, in the wake of aggression by enemies, make one almost suspect that this is probably an effort to build up an atmosphere for allowing the enemies to swallow those areas without the people in general resenting it. Maybe, such news items were given publicity without forethought. That is worse. For, if a man does it with forethought, we can only say that he is perverse. But if a man does it naturally, it means that, deep in his heart, he has lost the love for the motherland altogether. This is a very dangerous state of affairs.

Our own leaders chose to call the naked aggression by China and her occupation of tens of thousands of square miles of our territory as border conflict or boundary dispute! Our leaders say, borders shifting a few miles here or a few miles there in those snow-bound mountainous regions does not matter much, which has invariably meant thousands of square miles here and never a single mile there! We have often heard them saying that those borders are yet undefined and under dispute. Once Pandit Nehru while referring to our territory occupied by the Chinese, even referred to it as supposed to be ours!

Keep the Vision Aflame

Alas! Nowhere do we find the vibrant and complete vision of our motherland inspiring our people to strive and sacrifice in defence of her integrity. A spirit of compromise, an attitude of purchasing peace by parting with portions of our motherland to whoever chooses to lay axe on her, has taken hold of our people. Even the memory of those parts under enemies possession is dying away. How many of us feel the insult that we are denied access to our holy Kailas and Manasarovar, that we have no chance even to take a dip in the scared Sindhu, which gave us the name Hindu and Hindusthan? Takshashila, once the world-centre for diffusion of Hindu thought, is no more with us. Mulasthan (Multan), which witnessed the incarnation to the terrible Narasimha for the protection of Prahlad form the demon Hiranyakashipu, is once again under the heels of a demonic domination. Do all these memories burn in our veins?

We have especially to guard ourselves and our coming generations in this regard, lest the oppressive weight of external conditions blur our vision and crush our spirit. We shall only deaden our conscience by thinking and repeating that our present-day political borders represent our complete motherland. How humiliating it is to our manliness and how insulting to our intelligence! At times, political boundaries undergo some changes on account of political impacts and the whimsical fortunes of war. But it can never mean that the portions we have lost politically are not parts of our motherland at all.

Was not the whole of our country, until recently, under the foreign domination of the British? Before that, was not part of our country under Muslim domination for centuries? Then, should we say that the whole of this country was not ours at all during those periods? Did we not, on the other hand, struggle and make sacrifices domination? And is not every speck of our land protected and purified by the sacred blood of countless heroes and martyrs? If, today, we say that what we have lost to the

aggressors, whether they be the Muslims or Chinese, is not ours but belongs to them by right, then it only means that we have lost the will to fight, that we have forsaken our manliness to the extent that we have begun to glorify our defeats and humiliations.

We have to beware, more than anything else of this deadening of national will. If the will to fight, the will to suffer and sacrifice for the sake of liberty and integrity of the motherland becomes extinct, then, that will surely sound the death-knell to the freedom and honour of the nation.

Devotion to the motherland of the intense, dynamic, uncompromising and fiery type is the life-breath of a free, prosperous and glorious national existence on the face of the earth. And we, the Hindus, are the inheritors of the most sublime devotion lying dormant in every Hindu heart be fanned and joined in a sacred conflagration which shall consume all the past aggressions on our motherland and bring to life the dream of Bharat Mata reinstated in her pristine undivided form.

10. Children of the motherland

Since times immemorial, a great and cultured people called by the name Hindu have been living here as the children of this sacred motherland . There are, however , some who object to the name Hindu saying that it is comparativly of a recent origin and moreover given to us by the foreigners. They suggest the name Arya or Bharatiya in the place of Hindu .

Why the name Hindu?

Arya is an old and proud name, no doubt. But it has gone out of use especially for the last thousand years. Moreover, the mischievous propaganda carried on by the British under the cover of historical research during the last century has struck deep into the minds of our people the poisonous roots of the cooked up Aryan-Dravidian controversy. The use of the Arya would therefore be self- defeating in its purpose of bringing up before our eyes the picture of the whole of our people stretching from Himalayas to Kanyakumari, irrespective of all denominations, past and present.

Bhartiya too is an ancient name associated with us since hoary times. The name Bharat appears even in the vedas. Our Puranas have also spoken of our motherland as Bharat and of our people as Bharatis in fact, it connotes the same meaning as Hindu. But today, there is a misconception regarding the word Bhartiya also. It is commonly used as a translation of the word Indian which includes all the various other communities like the Muslim, Christian, Parsi, etc., residing in this land. So, the word 'Bhartiya' too is likely to mislead us when we want to denote our particular society. The word 'Hindu' alone connotes correctly and completely the meaning which we want to convey.

Nor is it historically correct to say that the name 'Hindu' is of recent origin or that it was given to us by foreigners. We find the name Sapta-Sindhu in the oldest records of the world - the Rig-Veda itself - as an epithet applied to our land and our people. And it is also well known that the syllable 'S' in Sanskrit is at times changed to 'H' as some of our Prakrit languages and even in European languages. And thus the name Hapta-Hindu and then 'Hindu' came into currency. Thus 'Hindu' is a proud name of our own origin and others learnt to denote us by it only later on.

According to the Brihaspati Agama the word 'Hindu' is formed with the letter 'Hi' from the Himalayas and 'Indu' from Indu Sarovar (the Southern Ocean), conveying the entire stretch of our motherland.
The Brihaspati Agama says:

“Himaalayam samaarabhya yaavadindu sarovaram
Tam devanirmitam desham Hindusthanam prachaksyate”

(The land created by the gods and stretching from Himalayas to the Indu (i.e.Southern) ocean is called Hindusthan.)
The word 'Hindu' has been especially associated with us during the crucial period of the last thousand years of our history. Right from the days of Prithviraj, all our great nation-builders, statesmen, poets and historians have taken the name 'Hindu' to denote our people and our dharma. The dream of all our valiant freedom fighters like Guru Govind, Vidyaranya and Shivaji had been to establish Hindu Swaraj. The name 'Hindu' carries with it the fragrant memories of all those great lives, their deeds and their aspirations. It has thus become a word that at once reflects the unity, the sublimity and the speciality of our people.

There are some who have the habit of dubbing us as narrow and parochial in our outlook because of our insistence on the word

'Hindu'. Pandit Nehru too levelled the same charge when I met him once. He said, "Why are you always harping upon 'Hindu' 'Hindu'? By this, you are only shutting up yourself within your four walls, not allowing the fresh breeze form the outside world to come in. There should be no walls separating us from the wide world outside. We should pull down all such out-dated barriers." Pandit Nehru was a big man and he spoke with great emotion. I calmly replied, " I totally agree with you that we should allow fresh breeze to come in form all ideologies prevalent in several countries, sift them and assimilate whatever is beneficial to us. But to do that, is it necessary that we should demolish the walls of our house and bring down the roofs upon our heads? On the contrary, would it not be wise to keep our house intact and just open the windows and doors to let in the outside breeze? I feel that broadmindedness, if stretched beyond the practical limit, would only end up in finishing our national entity. And I must say it is our so-called narrow national outlook which will ultimately help raising up our nation even while absorbing what is desirable form the outside world." To this, Pandit Nehru remarked, " Well, I concede that such conviction is needed to put in determined efforts for any cause."

Sign of Evolution

Let us now take a look at our Hindu life. When people, especially outsiders, see the multitude of our faiths, sects, castes, languages, customs and habits, they are confounded, and they exclaim, "With all these heterogeneous elements and discordant notes, how can you call this a single society at all? Where is the single way of life you call 'Hindu'?"

Well, this question stems from a superficial view of our Hindu life. A tree, for example, appears to be full of heterogeneous parts like the branches, leaves, flowers and fruits. The trunk differs from the branches, the branches form the leaves-all as if entirely

different form one another. But we know that all these apparent diversities are only the varied manifestations of the same tree, the same sap running through and nourishing all those parts. So is the case with the diversities of our social life which have been evolved down these millennia. They are no more a source of dissension and disruption than a leaf or a flower is in the case of a tree. This kind of natural evolution has been a unique feature of our social life.

In fact, in the scheme of nature, the evolution of life has followed the same pattern. Life, in its primitive stage, is in a shapeless condition and is called 'amoeba'. It is an unicellular organism, complete in itself. It can be split into two similar ones. It is in the primary state of protoplasm and stands in the lowest rung of evolution. As evolution progresses, various life species come into being with differentiated organs to fulfill the increasing number of functions. Finally, the human body is formed which is a tremendously complex mechanism composed of innumerable organs, each endowed with a specific function, but all of them bound with one another in a common current of life. That is the highest evolved form of life on earth. So we find that the different organs or diversities are not a sign of immaturity or heterogeneity but of a highly evolved state. All the organs, though apparently of diverse forms, work for the welfare of the body and thus subscribe to its strength and growth.

The Unique Picture

Likewise is the case with society. An evolved society, for the proper functioning of various duties, develops a multitude of diverse functional groups. Our old social order laid down a specific duty for each group and guided all the individuals and groups in their natural line of evolution just as the intellect directs the activities of the innumerable parts of the body. The highest scope for development of the individual was secured in the

process of his best service to the Virat Purusha (Corporate Person) of society. Such was the highly complex and organised structure of society that we had envisaged as the practical ideal and strove to realise it in life. This state, looked at from a distance, appears as a bewildering diversity but, in fact, denotes the highest evolved state of society that ever existed on the face of the world.

But the present-day mind, accustomed to viewing things through the medium of foreign 'isms' and their high-sounding slogans of 'equality', has failed to grasp this unique feature and has raised the cry that the various diversities of our life are all so many sources of dissension and should therefore be eradicated and rolled into a 'classless' society. Merely because the various limbs and organs in a body appear different and play their own specific functions, should we call them different 'classes' and proceed to remove them all to make the body a 'classless' entity? If we do that, will that be evolution or murder?

The unique feature of 'unity in diversity' has expressed itself in all spheres of our social life, in its material as well as spiritual aspect. It is like a bright lamp covered on all sides with glasses of various colours. The inside light appears to take on the different hues and shades according to the angle from which one views it. It is this wondrous variety of expressions that has made some people say that ours is not one society, not one nation, but a 'multinational country'!

We shall be able to analyse the present-day maladies of our social life and be able to devise ways and means to remedy them if we start with this correct appraisal of our social life.

‘Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudha Vadanti’

The first special characteristic that strikes the eye of an outsider is the bewildering variety of sects and sub-sects like Shaiva, Vaishnava, Shakta, Vaidik, Bouddha, Jain, Sikh, Lingayat, Aryasamaj, etc., obtaining in the elastic framework of our dharma. A great masters and sponsorers of all these upasanas founded these various forms of worship to suit the various mental aptitudes of our people, but in the last analysis referred them all to the same goal of realising the Ultimate Truth-variously called Brahma, Atma, Shiva, Vishnu, Ishwara or even Shoonya or Maha Soonya.

See how the following shloka beautifully comprises and harmonises the various sects and philosophies in the Hindu fold:

"Yam Shaivaah samupaasate Shiva iti Brahmeti Vedantino Bauddhaah Buddha iti pramaanapatavah Karteti Naiyyayikaah Arhannityuta Jainashaasanarataah Karmeti Meemaamsakaah Soyam no vidadhatu vaanchhitaphalam Trailokyanaato Harih"

(He whom the Shaivas worship as Shiva, the Vedantins as Brahma, the Bouddhist as Buddha, the Naiyayikas (rationalists) as Karta, the Jains as Arhan, the Meemamsaka as Karma, may He, the Lord of the three worlds, fulfil our desires.) There is a revealing anecdote in the life of Sant Tulsidas. People at one place took him to the temple of Sri Krishna, knowing fully well that his single-minded devotion was to Sri Rama. The saint stood before the idol entirely unmoved. He then prayed to Sri Krishna:

"Kaahai varanau chhavi aap ki
Bhale virajat naath
Tulasi mastak tab navai
Dhanush Baan leu haath"

(How shall I describe your radiant features? You are indeed

gracefully decorated. However, Tulasi will bow down his head only when you take bow and arrow in your hand..) And it is said, the idol of Sri Krishna was transformed into the form of his chosen deity Kodandadhari Sri Ram.

But the diversities in the path of devotion did not mean division is society. All are indivisible organs of one common dharma, which held society together. The same philosophy of life, the same goal, the same belief in the supremacy of the inner spirit over the outer gross things of matter, the same faith in rebirth, the same adoration of certain qualities like brahmacharya, satya, etc., the same holy samskars, in short, the same life-blood flowed through all these limbs of our society. It was the propoounder of pure Advaita (non-dualism), Sri Shankaracharya, who prescribed the Panchayatana pooja--the worship of the five deities, Surya, Shakti, Vishnu, Ganapati, and Shiva--for the sake of the common man. What a glorious example of the harmony of the various paths to God Realisation! Diversity of sect had seldom caused bloodshed or unholy rivalry amongst our people in the past. Even while one tried to establish one's own thesis or while attempting to disprove the others there was never any breaking of heads. This deep current of inner unity is described beautifully in Shivamahimna-stotra:

"Trayi saankhyam yogah Pashupatimatam Vaishnavamiti
Prabhinne prasthane paramidamadah
pathyamiti cha
Rucheenaam vaichitryadrujukutila
naanaapathajusha
Nrunaameko gamyastvamasi
Payasaamarnava iva"

(As the one ocean of all waters, You are the one goal of all men, who, according to their diverse tastes, take to the several paths, straight or crooked, considering this as superior or that as

wholesome among the differing paths-the Vedas, the Samkhya, the Yoga, the Shaiva and the Vaishnava faiths.)

This has been our tradition right form the hoary Vedic days down to the present times. All our great spiritual masters have upheld this unique and all-comprehensive aspect of religion. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa has declared, "As many views, so many ways." There can be as many faiths and creeds as the variety of attitudes and aptitudes of individuals.

The formation of many of these sects and aspects of philosophy served another very useful purpose. They helped to protect and maintain the integrity of our people. The Sikh sect, for example, came into being to contain the spread of Islam in Punjab. Later on, recognising the need of the times, Guru Govind Singh, the tenth Guru of the Sikhs, armed his disciples and turned them into a band of national heroes. When the Christian missionaries were trying to woo the people on our West Coast of their faith in the name of an all-merciful personal God, Sri Madhwacharya rose with the bhakti aspect of our dharma to neutralise that foreign poison. The efforts of Ramanujacharya and Basaveshwara too were inspired with the aim of removing feelings of high and low that had crept into the people and unifying them all in a common bond of devotion of God.

The Semitic Effects

It is our misfortune that this all-embracing aspect of our dharma has been lost sight of today. There are several reasons for this sad state of affairs. The narrow concept of religion that the West practised seems to have had its effect upon us. In all those Semitic religions-Judaism, Christianity and Islam-a single way of worship is prescribed for all. Those creeds have but one prophet, one scripture and one God, other than whom there is no path of salvation for the human soul. It requires no great intelligence to

see the absurdity of such a proposition. Naturally this Semitic concept of religion bred intolerance and divided people in the name of religion. Some countries in the West therefore got disgusted with feuds begotten by such religious fanaticism and took the extreme step of ousting religion itself. The Communist and Socialist philosophies, as taken up by Russia, are extreme instances of this revolt.

This has had its effects on our country also. People forgot that narrow sentiments of sectarian antagonism had never existed here. In their blind following of the Western developments, they too began to deride and disclaim dharma in their life. That has resulted in disrupting the benign bonds that used to hold the people together and inspire them for higher life.

Present Perversion

We are witnessing its disastrous effects today. Stories of mutual derision, even to the extent of becoming household jokes, are rampant throughout the length and breadth of the country. There is talk of 'domination' and 'imperialism' of one sect over another. If we are to speak in terms of 'domination' then we have to say that the North is being 'tyrannised' under the philosophical 'imperialism' of the South! Because, all the major schools of philosophical thought that have encompassed the whole of our land including the remotest corners of the North were propounded by the great teachers born in the South. Shankara, the propounder of the incomparable Advaita Philosophy, Ramanuja with his effulgence of Bhakti of Visishtadvaita, Madhwa with his sublime appeal of Dvaita, the duality of soul and God, and Vallabha too who looked upon the universe as a blissful projection of God Himself-all of them are from the South. So, should we say that the south is philosophically dominating over the whole of the country? How absurd! Well, is my head dominating over my legs? Are not both equally the parts of the same body?

The part which is geographically called north is as dear to us as the one called South. Ganga is as holy to us as Cauvery. The great Shivalinga formed out of ice in the Himalayan cave at Amarnath claims the same devotion from all of us as the Linga at Rameshwaram. We are intrinsically one, transcending all superficial barriers of distance, creed or sect. It is because this sap of unity is dried up today that all the various branches of the great tree of our dharma are falling apart.

Secondly, the name 'Hindu' which signified our all comprehensive dharma has fallen into disrepute. People have begun to feel ashamed of calling themselves Hindus. Thus the golden thread that strung together all these pearls of various spiritual hues and shades has been torn asunder and the various sects and creeds have begun to take a pride in their own exclusive names and parading themselves as non-Hindus.

Some of the Sikhs, Jains, Lingayats and Aryasamajists declare that they are separate from Hindus. Some prominent Sikh leaders are demanding and agitating for a separate sectarian Sikh State - though under the grab of a linguistic State, the Punjabi Suba. And strengthen their demand some of them have stooped to justify the creation of a separate State for Muslims, i.e., Pakistan. They have even gone to the extent of seeking its sympathy and help, forgetting all the barbaric atrocities and insults they had suffered at the hands of Pakistanis during the days of Partition. What greater misfortune could there be than that the present Sikh leaders should come forward to treat their great sect on par with the avowed destroyers of our desh and dharam and even seek the help of those very hostile forces from whose aggression it was born to protect the society!

The head of the Namadhari-panth of Sikh once said, "A person who is not a devout Hindu cannot be a Sikh either, cannot be a disciple of those great gurus who shed their blood in the cause of

the mother society and mother religion, i.e., the Hindu". Sri Guru Govind Singh had declared, "A true Sikh is one who has faith in the Vedas and Bhagavad-gita and who worships Rama and Krishna." It is undiluted loyalty to these words of gurus that makes a true Sikh. Those Gurus had forged that band of heroes for the protection of Hindu Society and called the Sikhs as being devoted shishyas (disciples), or as Khalsa for being virtuous and valorous, or as Akali for being the worshippers of Akal--the timeless Reality.

In fact their whole life, even to this day, is permeated with the same thoughts and feelings as the rest of Hindus. Even as recently as a couple of decades ago one son from every Hindu family used to be named Sikh. Our blood relations continue even to this day. It is only the poison of political ambitions that has roused the demon of separatism in that otherwise devoted and heroic 'sword arm' of Hinduism.

The Anti-Hindu Government

Even our persons at the helm of affairs have unwittingly fallen a prey to the pernicious idea of Sikh separatism. We often hear them calling upon 'Hindus and Sikhs' to lie in amity and harmony. It never occurs to them the persons in such high positions using an expression, which puts a seal of sanction of separatism between Sikhs and the rest of Hindus would only further embitter their relations. It is clearly written in our Constitution that the term 'Hindu' includes Sikhs, Jains, and Buddhists which means that the expression 'Hindu and Sikh' is opposed to the Constitution. What is misfortune the persons of such a stature should unconsciously insult our Constitution in this way!

Similarly, in a handout of Harijan Sevak Sangh the words 'Hindus and Harijans' were freely used.

Once some brethren belonging to the Jain faith posed a question to me as to how they can look upon themselves as Hindus since they had their own distinct Jain anushasan. I posed this query before a great Acharya of the Jain faith. The Archarya replied:

"The Vedas are a storehouse of knowledge par excellence. All types of faiths are accommodated in that. Some faiths are suited to men with a preponderance of rajas, while some are intended for those with tamas. Veda-Mata has not condemned anyone and discarded him as unfit for spiritual progress. Each one has been shown a path in line with his natural propensities so that he can go ahead without inhibitions. Veda-Mata has also shown a path to such of those souls who are highly sattvic by temperament. Well, the Jain faith has picked up those tenets and gone ahead. In fact, the role of Jain faith had been to make the entire Hindu society more and more sattvic in its spiritual content." The Jain sadhu ended his wise explanation with a pithy remark, "How can one who says that he is not a Hindu be a Jain at all?"

The narrow loyalties and mutual animosities among our various sects and sub-sects have become so acute that their rivalries and conflicts have reached ridiculous proportions, making us a laughing-stock in the eyes of the world. Years ago a quarrel arose among two branches of the same sect about the namam (a religious mark) to be applied on the forehead of a temple elephant-whether it should be of the 'Y' or 'U' shape. The case was taken from one court to another, and finally to the Privy Council in England! The Privy Council, however, refused to give its judgment, for the simple reason that elephant on whose froehead the namam was to be painted had died already!

The tragedy is, all such nonsense goes on under the name of dharma! What surprise is there if, on seeing such perversions, the people lose faith in dharma itself? It is not the defect of dharma but of ourselves. Dharma is like fire, a source of great power. Just

as the fire can burn in an oven to cook a sumptuous meal or can burn down the house itself, so also dharma could be a source of strength and unity as it used to be in olden times, or it could be turned into a source of dissension and disunity as at peresent.

The policy of the present Government has only added fuel to the fire. The very word 'Hindus' has become an anathema to our present rulers. Whoever disclaims the Hindu fold and parades himself as a non-Hindu minority finds a special favour with our Government. That has resulted in many of our sects vying with one another to claim that they are non-Hindus and to stretch their hands for special privileges in the share of power and pelf. And especially when they find that our leaders go to the extent of granting special political status to non-Hindu, anti-Hindu communities, their separation and even anti-Hindu spirit is all the more roused. They find that for being anti-Hindu, the Muslims got an independent State of their own. The Christians, too, are well on the way to achieve their independent 'Nagaland'. The Christian institutions, which even to this day fly the Union Jack on August 15 and carry on fanatic Christian propaganda, have no fear of losing their Government grants. On the other hand, if a Hindu educational institution starts Hindu prayers and Gita recitation, Government comes down with a heavy hand with threats to stop its grants.

How unfortunate that our own leaders, our own people, should be digging at the roots of our social cohesion and destroying the spirit of identity that informed and blended all the various sects into a harmonious whole in the past!

The wrong Scent

Looking at its present decadent and perverted form and mistaking it for its original form, there are some who never tire of propagating that it was the Varna-vyavastha that brought about

our downfall down these centuries. But does this interpretation bear the scrutiny of history? Castes, there were in those ancient times too, continuing for thousands of years of our glorious national life. There is nowhere any instance of its having hampered the progress or disrupted the unity of society. It, in fact, served as a great bond of social cohesion.

Even during the past one thousand years when our nation fell before foreign onslaughts, there is no instance on record to show that caste distinctions were at the root of our national disunity that helped the invaders to conquer us. The person responsible for the defeat of Prithiviraj, the Hindu King at Delhi, by Mohammed Ghori was his own caste-relation Jayachand. The person who hounded Rana Pratap form forest to forest was none other than his own caste-man Raja Mansingh. Shivaji too was opposed by men of his own caste. Even in the last-ditch battle between the Hindus and the British at Poona in 1818, it was a fellow casteman of the Peshwas, Natu by name, who lowered the Hindu flag and hoisted the British flag. There was a veritable race of such traitors but they were so because they fell a prey to other temptations and for other reasons. Caste never came into the picture.

If the caste system had really been the root cause of our weakness, then our people should have succumbed to foreign invasion far more easily than those people who had no castes. But what does history say? After the death of Mohammed Pygamber, his followers poured out form Arabstan in waves after waves with their swords dripping with blood and overran vast portions of the globe, trampling under their feet all the various empires that lay in their path--Iran, Egypt, Rome, Europe and all others right up to China. The people of those mighty empires were swept away before the fury of the Muslim onslaught-many never to appear again on the world stage.

The same tides of fanatic fury dashed also against the shores of Hindustan. But the picture that we see here is different altogether. Our people braved the onslaughts relentlessly for over a thousand years and instead of being sucked up, ultimately succeeded in crushing completely the forces of the enemy. The throne of Muslim power at Delhi lay shattered to pieces as a symbol of the conquering spirit of our people. All these centuries of fierce struggle for survival carried on upto final victory, be it remembered, the castes did exist.

We know as a matter of history that our northwestern and northeastern areas, where the influence of Buddhism had disrupted the caste system, fell an easy prey to the onslaughts of Muslims. Gandhar, now called Kandahar, became completely Muslimised. Conversion took a heavy toll in East Bengal also. But the areas of Delhi and Uttar Pradesh, which were considered to be very orthodox and rigid in caste restrictions, remained predominantly Hindu even after remaining as the citadels of Muslim power and fanaticism for a number of centuries. We know that even as late as Shivaji's time, the so-called 'low-caste' also played an epic role in the resurrection of swaraj.

Thus history bears eloquent witness to both sides of the picture. On the one hand, the so-called 'caste-ridden' Hindu Society has remained undying and unconquerable and still has the vitality to produce a Ramakrishana, a Vivekanada, a Tilak and a Gandhi after facing for over two thousand years the depredations of Greeks, Shakas, Hunas, Muslims and even Europeans, by one shock of which, on the other hand, the so-called casteless societies crumbled to dust never to rise again.

Adding Fuel to the Fire

Today, of course, the caste system has degenerated beyond all recognition. Added to the perversity aggravated over the

centuries, a new factor has been introduced into our body-politic which has further intensified the rigidity and perversity of castes by those very persons who are most vociferous in their denunciation of the system. During elections, their consideration for selection of candidates as also their appeal to the voters is mainly 'caste'. At the root of the rising tempo of caste hatred and rivalry lies this appeal to gross selfishness and love of power in the name of caste. Even the state machinery is being prostituted for further widening these dissensions. Separatist consciousness breeding jealousy and conflict is being fostered in sections of our people by naming them Harijans, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and so on and by parading the gift of special concessions to them in a bid to make them all their slaves with the lure of money.

In their hearts of hearts, very few of those anti-caste zealots experience the sense of unity that can transcend the present-day perversities. Anti-caste tirade has verily become a mask for them to strengthen their own positions among their caste fellowmen. To what extent this venom has enterd our body-politic can be surmised from an incident which occurred some years ago. There is a 'Victory Pillar' near Pune, raised by the English in 1818 to commemorate their victory over the Peshwas. An eminent leader of the Harijans once addressed his caste-brethren under that Pillar. He declared that the pillar was a symbol of their victory over the Brahmins as it was they who had fought under the British and defeated the Peshwas, the Brahmins. How heart-rending it is to hear an eminent leader thus describing the hated sign of slavery as an emblem of victory, and the despicable action of fighting as slaves of a foreigner against our own kith and kin as an achievement of glory! How utterly his eyes must have been blinded by hatred, not able even to discern the simple fact of who were the victors and who the defeated! What a perversity?

Many Strings, but Same Melody

The diversity of our national heritage has also expressed itself in the field of our languages. Considering the vastness of our country and of our people, it is nothing to be surprised about. If any person in our country starts from his place and moves on foot from one province to another, he can observe a gradual change in language after every ten or fifteen miles, a natural transformation from one language to the other, and coalescing at the border. Even in the same language there is remarkable variance in the usage of words and expressions form place to place owing to the closeness to other languages. It only shows that all these languages are intrinsically one. It is like the gradual changeover of colours in a rainbow. Though it appears resplendent with a variety of hues, it is the same ray of the sun, which has taken those charming grabs. Similar is the glory of our languages.

Take any language in the country; we find the same sublime sentiments, the same inspiring thoughts and ideals reflected in all its literature. The same personality of Sri Ramachandra stands eulogised by a Valmiki in Sanskrit, by a Tulsi in Hindi and by a Kamba in Tamil. What does it matter if the medium changes provided the same light shines through all of them? It is just like a man dressing himself in various beautiful garments-of course all befitting his culture and character. The man does not change on that account.

These days we are hearing much about Tamil. Some protagonists of Tamil claim that it is a distinct language altogether with a separate culture of its own. They disclaim faith in the Vedas, saying that Tirukkural is their distinct scripture. Tirukkural is undoubtedly a great scriptural text more than two thousands year old. Saint Tiruvalluvar is its great author. We remember him in our Pratah-smaranm. There is an authentic translation of that book by V.V.S.Iyer, the well-known revolutionary. What is the theme propounded therein, afterall? The same old Hindu concept of chaturvidha-purushartha is put forth as the ideal. Only the chapter

on Moksha comes in the beginning. It does not advocate any particular mode of worship or name of God but enuntiates the pure idea of Moksha. Thus it is not even a sectarian book. Mahabharata also eulogises the same picture of social life as Tirukkural presents. Except with the Hindu, this unique vision of social life is not found anywhere else. It is thus purely a Hindu text propounding great Hindu thoughts in a chaste Hindu language.

In fact all our languages, whether Tamil or Bengali, Marathi or Punjabi are our national languages. All these languages and dialects are like so many flowers shedding the same rich fragrance of our national culture. The source of inspiration for all these has been the queen of languages, the language of gods- Sanskrit. By virtue of its richness and sacred association, it also can serve as the common medium of our national intercourse. Nor is it difficult to acquire a working knowledge of Sanskrit. Sanskrit is to this day one of the greatest cementing factors of our national life. But, unfortunately, it is not in common usage now, nor do our present rulers possess the moral pride and grit to bring it into vogue.

English or Hindi?

There are some who desire that English should continue as the lingua franca for all time to come. Language being a living medium of human intercourse, the foreign language English is bound to bring in its train English culture and English life-patterns also. And allowing foreign life-patterns to take root here would mean the undermining of our own culture and dharma. Centuries of foreign rule has failed to destroy our great nation only because we have preserved our cultural heritage through the media of our languages. Acceptance of English would mean sapping those mainsprings of our vitality. English was just an artificial imposition that accompanied the English domination and

as such must be thrown off now that we have become free. To continue to give it the same status as it enjoyed during the foreign domination would be a sign of mental slavery and a blot on our national prestige in the eyes of the world.

There is not a shadow of doubt that English is bound to go for two very solid reasons. Fristly, during the British regime, there was a natural tendency on the part of the people to learn the language of the rulers, become proficient in it and even face the British in their own language. Now, with the Britisher gone, that urge has naturally disappeared. Secondly, during the British rule non-learning of English put a virtual ban on entry into any lucrative post in Government service. Without English-learning even the best of intellectuals were thrown in the wilderness, not only financially but in social life as well. Now that fear also is gradually going. English language was just a part of British Rule and no amount of artificial puffing up can make it survive for long after its main support has collapsed.

As a solution to the problem of lingua franca, till the time sanskrit takes that place we shall have to give priority to Hindi on the score of convenience. Naturally we have to prefer that form of Hindi which like all other Bharitya languages, stem from Sanskrit and gets sustenance from Sanskrit for its future growth in all fields of modern knowledge like science and technology. It does not mean that Hindi is the only national language or that it is the oldest or richest of all our languages. In fact Tamil is a much richer and older language. But Hindi has come to be the spoken language of a large section of our people and is the easiest of all our languages for learning and speaking. If we go to Kashi or Prayag on the occasion of Kumbha or some other mela where people from far North, South, East and West flock to have a holy dip in the Ganga, the vast multitude manages to express itself only in Hindi, however crude it may be.

Long Live All Languages!

We have therefore to take Hindi in the interest of national unity and self- respect and not allow ourselves to be swept off our feet by slogans like Hindi imperialism or domination of the North, etc. In fact, Bengali, Marathi and Gujarati have made tremendous strides in spite of British rule. They have succeeded in producing such outstanding works as have drawn unstinted praise from the greatest men of letters the world over. No one would ever tolerate the idea of destroying our various beautiful languages, which have been so ably expressing the soul of our nation for the last so many centuries only to retain a single language. Any apprehensions of encroachment for dominance over other languages by Hindi are therefore pure fiction cooked up by interested politicians.

In fact, with rise of Hindi, all our sister languages also will flourish. The enemy of all our Bharatiya languages is English. Once an advocate in a prominent city in Tamilnadu stated that Hindi would destroy Tamil. But when asked why he continued to speak in English and not in Tamil in district and lower courts which permitted the use of Tamil, he had no answer for it. The fact is, the real enemy of Tamil is not Hindi; rather English is the enemy of both. This is not the case of Tamil alone, but of all our other languages as well.

This is how language has become one more point of friction after the advent of Swaraj. The formation of linguistic states has given one more handle to politicians to work up linguistic chauvinism in the minds of people. It is very strange that even eminent men indulge in mud-slinging at other languages. A very eminent personality form the South once said in a public meeting that Hindi had but two great literary works-one, the Tulsi Ramayana and the other, Railway Time Table! To match this, a noted Marathi dramatist made one of his character say, "Southern

language? Put some pebbles in a clay pot and shake it vigorously and you hear those languages!" No doubt, this was said out of fun, but such fissiparous fun and ignorant mocking will only make matters worse.

The Great Myth

Today so many other new points of dissension and disintegration are cropping up. The Aryan-Dravidian controversy, for example, is very recent and artificial. It is one of the modern superstitions being assiduously built up by unscrupulous power-seeking persons. Whatever diversity of race we may have had in this country to begin with was obliterated long ago by time and processes of history. Two thousand years ago the country had been grouped under Pancha Gowda and Pancha Dravida, the South coming under the letter name. It was not a racial but only a territorial denomination. The people in the South were always considered to be as much 'Aryan' as those in the North. In our country the word 'Aryan' was always a sign of culture and not the name of a race. All through the puranic literature, wives address husbands as 'Arya'. Surely the wives were not anarya! 'Arya' simply conveyed 'a noble person'. We find Sri Krishna too using the word 'Arya' in the same sense in Bhagavad-Gita. When Arjuna's heart fails on the opening day of Kurukshetra war, Sri Krishna chides him for his anaryajustam i.e., ignoble attitude.

It is being made out today that the struggle between Rama and Ravana was the one between Arya and Dravida. How ludicrous! Ravana himself was a great Sanskrit scholar and a devotee of Shiva. He is even reported to have set Sama-veda to music. His father Vaishrava was a Brahmin and so was his grandfather, Pulastya. If anything, Ravana was oppressing the South and Rama only liberated the Southern people form his oppression!

And again, the Harsha-Pulakeshin struggle is sought to be made out as an attempt by the North to dominate the South and its successful rebuttal by the South. But Pulakeshin was not a Dravidian at all, much less a Tamilian! His kingdom was founded in Pratishthan- modern Paithan- on the banks of Godavari in Mahrashtra. In any case, the two kings came to terms and lived amicably. The North-South controversy is pure and simple power-politics got up by modern politicians who find the present climate extremely congenial for sowing seeds of all sorts of separation.

The Fresh "Inventions"

We also find ever new denominations coming up in common usage-all connoting a fundamental disparity between one section of the people and the other. In the natural course of our national life, there are some who live in cities, mainly educated employees, industrial labourers and traders; some others, mainly agriculturists, live in villages and some have as yet remained in jungles and hills. But those forest-dwellers, the vanvasis, are now called adivasis, aboriginals, as if all others are upstarts and settlers coming here from somewhere outside!

Then there is also the artificial barrier created between the city-dwellers and villagers. The so-called educated man feels a class by himself, and looks down upon the village folk as uncivilised. The evil legacy of British rule, when the English-educated used to dress and behave as their English masters did and looked down upon the common people in a spirit of contempt, is still continuing. The English-educated still feel themselves somewhat different, somewhat above the other people. Today there is a call to the educated to 'to go back to villages' and improve the standard of life of the villagers. But how many really go? The very idea of village life chills their heart!

Let us not forget that it is the common folk in the villages who have been the real backbone of our nation. Even in the past, whenever our society was threatened by foreign invasions, it was these 'village rustics', these very 'unlettered masses' who rose to the rescue of swadesh and swadharama, regardless of the endless suffering they had to endure and sacrifice they had to offer.

There is now a clamour for 'equality for women' and their 'emancipation from man's domination'! Reservation of seats in various positions of power is being claimed on the basis of their separate sex, thus adding one more 'ism'-'sexism!'- to the array of casteism, communalism, linguism, etc.

Realise the Grand Unity

Such is the picture of our people, past and present. The picture should naturally spur every son of this soil to revive once again the age-old spirit of identity in our people in all its pristine purity. The whole of our people should be reinstalled as the living God in our hearts. In fact, such a spirit of identity had been the one undying message of our ancient culture. The others stopped at saying 'Fatherhood of God' and 'brotherhood of man.' We travelled far ahead and realised the identity permeating all things right from Brahma down to inert matter.

Let us therefore revive that pure spirit of oneness born out of the realisation that we are all children of this great and sacred motherland Bharat Mata. Let us cry a halt to the various discordant notes being raised knowingly or unknowingly, landing us in confusion and fission. Let us not be like the blind men in the story, who touched the various parts of an elephant and gave their own descriptions of the animal. The one who caught hold of its leg compared it to a pillar, the other who touched its trunk said it was like a serpent, and another who embraced its belly likened it

to a huge drum and so on. Each was partly right, but all were wrong in their conception of the animal in its totality.

Once the life-stream of unity begins to flow freely in all the veins of our body-politic, the various limbs of our national life will automatically begin to function actively and harmoniously for the welfare of the nation as a whole. Such a living and growing society will preserve out of its multitude of old systems and pattern whatever is essential for and conducive to its progressive march and throw off those which have outlived their utility and evolve new ones in their place. No one need shed tears at the passing of the old order nor shirk to welcome the new order of things. That is in the nature of all living and growing organisms. As a tree grows, ripe leaves and dry twigs fall off making way for fresh growth. The main point to bear in mind is to see that the life-sap of oneness permeates all parts of our social set-up. Every system or pattern will live or change or even entirely disappear according as it nourishes that life-sap or not. Hence, it is useless in the present social context to discuss about the future of all such systems. The supreme call of the times is to revive the spirit of inherent oneness and the awareness of its life-purpose in our society. All other things will take care of themselves.

A Duty by Birth

Let us all remember that this oneness is ingrained in our blood from our very birth, because we are all born as Hindus. Some wise men of today tell us that no man is born as Hindu or Muslim or Christian but as a simple human being. This may be true of others. But for a Hindu, he gets the smaskar when he enters the mother's womb, and the last when his body is consigned to the flames. There are sixteen smaskars for the Hindu, which make him what he is. We are Hindus even before we emerge form the womb of our mother. We are therefore born as Hindus. About the others, they are born to this world as simple unnamed human

beings and later on, either circumcised or baptised, they become Muslims or Christians.

Therefore, to strengthen the unity and spirit of identity in our society is a duty born with our birth, our sahaja karma. And that which is our sahaja karma must not be given up even if it may appear to be defective.

"Sahajam karma Kaunteya
Sadoshamapi na tyajet"

says the Gita. It is therefore our pre-eminent duty to see that the present differences and dissensions eating into our vitals are removed and our society moulded once again into a unified and harmonious whole.

We have also to remember that all other persuasions like politics etc., come later in life as we grow. Political parties come and pass away. Even today several parties are ranging one against another and who knows, the party at the zenith of popularity and power today may go down tomorrow and another may come up in its place. The political parties are by nature transitory. But society is eternal, immortal. So many kings and dynasties, so many of administration, so many political and economic systems have come and gone during the last thousands of years. But we as people bound together by ties of blood and history, remain one and whole. Therefore, we have to discriminate between what is permanent and what is transient and stick to that which is permanent and if the transient comes in the way of the permanent, it has to be given up.

"Yo dhruvaani parityajya
Adhruvam parishevate

Dhruvaani tasya nashyanti
Adhruvam nashtameva hi"

(He who gives up the permanent in pursuance of the transient loses the permanent; nor does the transient remain with him.) Dhruvam (permanent) is society and politics is adhruvam (transient). If in the rave for politics we give up society and destroy its inherent unity we will have gone against our fundamental duty.

Call of Real Devotion

Hindu society, whole and integrated, should forever be the single point of devotion for all of us. No other consideration whether of caste, sect, language, province or party should be allowed to come in the way of that single-minded devotion. That is the criterion for real devotion. There is a notable episode in the life of Mira. When she was obstructed in her devotion to Sri Krishna by her own relatives, she wrote to Goswami Tulsidas seeking his advice. He replied in the form of a beautiful poem, which appears in the Vinaya Patrika wherein he has said:

"Jaake priya na Ram Vaidehi
Tajiye taahi koti vairi sama
yadyapi parama sanehi"

That means, those who do not love Rama, i.e., the object of devotion, and who come as an obstacle must be considered as ten million times an enemy, though they may be extremely near and dear to us. Then he has given the examples where the mother, father and all others were given up for sake of the realisation of one's object of devotion. Therefore, in the devotion to our Living God, the Hindu society, the various disruptive passions ruling our minds today have to be given up, as they come in the way of our

discharging the essential and foremost duty of upholding and strenghtening the inherent unity of our people.

May we all rise and take the life-giving message of our innate unity to every Hindu heart and home, transcending and submerging all other barriers and light up in every Hindu heart the effulgent vision of a single living Smajadevata throbbing with life in Her multitude of glorious expressions.

11. For a Virile National Life

DR. KESHAV BALIRAM HEDGEWAR, founder of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, was from his early boyhood intensely devoted to the cause of nation and was in the thick of the various movements going on at that time for the liberation of our motherland. He was engrossed for several years in the revolutionary movement. He later on plunged into the agitations and organisational work of the Indian National Congress.

But soon he discovered that the underlying idea in all those movements was merely one of ousting the British. And that idea was equated with nationalism. For most of the leading men of those times, 'anti-Britishism' and 'nationalism' were interconvertible terms. Our founder felt dissatisfied with that superficial kind of thinking. He knew from a deep understanding of the history of our nation and also of other nations that the concept of 'nation' was a positive one and was not based on antagonism to anyone else. And he also knew that the slightest distortion in the initial concept of the national goal would, in spite of the best of intentions, ultimately lead us to irretrievable catastrophic results. Our fate would be like that of the person who started to make the idol of Vinayaka but ended by making a monkey:

“Vinaayakam prakurvaano
Rachayaamaasa Vaanaram”

It was after profound cogitation along these lines that Dr. Hedgewar decided to start the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh on the basis of the correct and positive and abiding concept of our nationhood.

What, then, is that true concept of our nationality?

Let us start with stating and analysing its concept as understood and practised in the modern would, as that would help us appreciate the subject in the present context.

What Modern Scholars Say

How did the concept of a 'nation' first manifest itself in the West? To begin with, various groups of people delimited themselves within some sort of natural territorial boundaries. The people residing in a particular territory developed a feeling that they were the sons of that soil, that they had their own way of life which they had to preserve and protect, and that, in short, they were a single, separate and distinct entity. They thus formed themselves into cohesive, indivisible groups. At various times and from various countries, leading men of thought gave expression to the idea of a 'nation' to define those groups. It we collect the various expressions and definitions put forth by them and bring out their essence, we arrive at certain simple conclusions.

The first requisite for a nation is a contiguous piece of land delimited as far as possible by natural boundaries to serve as the substratum on which the nation has to live, grow and prosper. Then the second requisite is, the people living in that particular territory should have developed love and adoration for it as their motherland, as the place of their sustenance, security and prosperity. In short, they should feel that they are the children of that soil.

Then, that people should not be just a mass of men, just a juxtaposition of heterogeneous individuals. They should have evolved a definite way of life moulded by community of life-ideals, of culture, of feelings, sentiments, faith and traditions. If people thus become united in a coherent and well-ordered society having common traditions and aspirations, a common memory of the happy and unhappy experience of their past life, common

feelings of friendship and hostility, and their interests intertwined in one identical whole-then such people living as children of that particular territory may be termed a 'nation'.

Hindu - the Child of Bharat

If we apply this definition acknowledged by all the learned men in the world, to our own country, we find that this great country of our, extending in the north form the Himalayas-with all its branches spreading north, south, east and west, and with the territories included in those great branches-right up to the Southern ocean inclusive of all the islands, is one great natural unit. As the Child of this soil, our well-evolved society has been living here for thousands of years. This society has been living here for thousands of years. This society has been known, especially in modern times, as the Hindu Society. For, it is the forefathers of the Hindu People that have set up standards and traditions of love and devotion for the motherland. They also prescribed various duties and rites with a view to keeping aglow in our mind a living and complete picture of our motherland and devotion to it as a Divine Entity. And again it is they who shed their blood in defence of its sanctity and in integrity. That all this has been done by the Hindu People alone is a fact to which our history of thousands of years bears testimony. It means that only the Hindu has been living here as the child of this soil. All our great personalities right form hoary ages down to modern times have, by their life and example, confirmed the continuity of this sacred bond.

The common adoration for the motherland had made our people, in a way, related by blood to one another-form the man in Kashi to the man in Kanyakumari and form a forest-dweller to a city-dweller. The various castes, the various ways of worshipping

God, the various languages are all expressions of the one great homogeneous solid Hindu People-the children of this motherland.

Community of Culture

Then we , the Hindu People, have had an ideal viz., to realise the Ultimate Truth. In keeping with that ideal we have a dharma which is incomparable for its breadth of vision and encompasses all grades and aspects of human life. We have a current of life, our samskriti (culture) which instills sublime qualities of purity, character, fortitude and self-sacrifice in the individual, enabling him to attain that highest goal of human existence. That stamp of culture is manifest in our day-to-day, sublimating the mundane into the transcendent. For example, it is common custom with us to call every woman, even a little girl, by the word ma, i.e., mother. The same meaning is conveyed whatever other words we may use in our various dialects. That is, every woman, whatever her age or status in life, except a man's wife, is a manifestation of the mother to him. This is a special feature of our culture.

The famous instance of Shivaji who sent back honourably and laden with presents the beautiful daughter-in-law of the Muslim Subhedar of Kalyan captured in war (though it appears exceptional in the eyes of the foreign, especially Muslim, historians) is a very ordinary instance symbolic of the sublime culture of this land. And this is shared even by the commoners here.

There was a revealing instance during the holocaust after the assassination of Ghandhiji. An orgy of murder, loot and arson had been let loose on innocent people by anti-national and subversive elements. One such murderous mob attacked a house. Only the lady of the house was in. Out of terror she opened the door. On seeing her alone, the mob paused for a while. Notorious ruffians were leading the mob. But even then the ancient call of our

culture matruvat paradareshu (look upon women as mother) which was in their blood, made them treat her with utmost courtesy. They told her that they were out to burn and loot, but would arrange for her conduct to a place of safety. Two of them were even deputed for her escort! In spite of the past thousand-year-long corroding influence of foreigners and the all-round immorality raging among our 'top-class' at present, such glowing instances of character are still to be found in our common people. This gives us an idea of the distinctively pure and sublime culture, which has been reared in our hearts. It has given us a complexion all our own.

Also, down all these thousands of years, we have produced a whole galaxy of seers and sages, savants and heroes who have led us in our march in search of God and attainment of material affluence and hounour. They built up a social order to meet the needs of various kinds of individuals, developed economic systems for the proper production and distribution of wealth and formed political institutions for the protection and upkeep of the orderly evolution of society. As a result, during all these centuries of our existence here, we have had similar experiences of prosperity and adversity, of friendship and hostility, all our interests having been inextricably joined together.

Whenever, by mistake, we fought with one another imagining that the interests of a particular group were in opposition to those of another and developed separate and mutually hostile kingdoms, we lost the battle against the foreigners, and all were reduced to abject slavery and misery. Same was the result when one section of our people was friendly to some foreign power while another was struggling against it. The case of Prithviraj Chouhan is in point. His enemy was Mohammed Ghori. Jayachand made friends with Mohammed Ghori. Here were two prominent persons of our country-one of them an enemy and the other a friend of the same invader. The result was that Prithviraj was defeated and killed.

Jayachand also was destroyed. Mohammed Ghori became the king. And the whole train of disasters over the last eight hundred years, and which in the present times has culminated in the Partition, was set in motion. On the other hand, whenever we realised, even for a short period, that our interests were indivisible, that our friends and foes were alike to all of us, such immense power was generated in our national life that the power of the foreigner lay shattered at our feet. All the requisites for making a full-fledged nation are thus fulfilled in the life of this great Hindu People. Therefore, we say that in this land of ours, Bharat, the national life is of the Hindu People. In short, this is the Hindu Nation.

Two Opposites Concur

But some of the so-called 'secularists' of our country become 'restless' when they hear words like dharma and samskriti while discussing the concept of a 'nation'. "Why do you bring religion into politics?" they ask. So let us take the instance of Stalin, who had denounced God and religion as being an opium meant to delude the ignorant. Explaining the concept of 'nation', he once said that a nation is not formed out of mere common economic or political interests of a people residing in a common territory but that it is 'a community of spiritual consciousness'.

Swami Vivekananda, the great harbinger of our national renaissance in modern times, had time and again declared in unequivocal terms that this is Hindu Nation and placed before us the great Hindu ideals of Guru Govind Singh and Chhatrapati Shivaji. In fact, he defined our nation as composed of those "whose hearts beat to the same spiritual tune."

We thus say that our Hindu Nationhood is a truth, borne out by logic, experience, and history. It is the supreme solid fact of our

national life and not any fleeting 'ism' born out of political and economic theories or exigencies.

Touchstone of Nationality

When we say "This is the Hindu Nation", there are some who immediately come up with the question, "What about the Muslims and the Christians dwelling in this land? Are they not also born and bred here? How could they become aliens just because they have changed their faith?" But the crucial point is whether THEY remember that they are the children of this soil. What is the use of merely OUR remembering? That feeling, that memory, should be cherished by THEM. We are not so mean as to say that with a mere change in the method of worship, an individual ceases to be a son of the soil. We have no objection to God being called by any name whatever. We, in the Sangh, are Hindus to the core. That is why we have respect for all faiths and religious beliefs. He cannot be a Hindu at all who is intolerant of other faiths. But the question before us now is, what is the attitude of those people who have been converted to Islam or Christianity? They are born in this land, no doubt. But are they true to their salt? Are they grateful to this land which has brought them up? Do they feel that they are the children of this land and its tradition, and that to serve it is their great good fortune? Do they feel it a duty to serve her? No! Together with the change in their faith, gone is the spirit of love and devotion for the nation.

Nor does it end there. They have also developed a feeling of identification with the enemies of this land. They call themselves 'Sheikhs' and 'Syeds'. Sheikhs and Syeds are certain clans in Arabia. How then did these people come to feel that they are their descendants? That is because they have cut off their ancestral national moorings of this land and mentally merged themselves with the aggressors. They still think that they have come here only to conquer and establish their kingdoms. So we see that it is

not merely a case of change of faith, but a change even in national identity. What else is it, if not treason, to join the camp of the enemy leaving their mother-nation in the lurch?

An eminent American Professor once asked me the question, 'Muslims and Christians are of this land alone. Why don't you consider them as of your own?" To that, I put him a counter-question: "Suppose one of our countrymen goes to America, settles there and wants to become an American citizen. However, he refuses to accept your Lincoln, Washington, Jefferson and others as his national heroes. Would you then call him a national of America? Tell me frankly." He said, "No."

Then I told him, "Why should not the same criterion be applied to our country also? How can you say that we should call such people nationals who, while living here, work against the honour and traditions of the country, and insult our national heroes and objects of national veneration?"

Not Nurture But Culture Counts

The mere fact of birth or nurture in a particular territory, without a corresponding mental pattern, can never give a person the status of a national in that land, Mental allegiance has been, in fact, the universally accepted criterion for nationality.

There is an old story with a lesson for us. Once a lioness roaming in the jungle found a small baby jackal and brought it to her cave. The lioness had a few cubs. She began to feed the infant jackal also with her milk along with her cubs. They all began to grow and play about as brothers. Once when they had gone into the thick of the jungle an elephant came that way. The jackal kid, on seeing that colossal animal, cried out in terror to his brothers to run away. The lion cubs replied, "What a fool your are! After so many days we have come across such fine prey. If you are afraid,

you go home. We will fight." The jackal kid came running to the cave and narrated to the lioness that a great calamity had befallen his younger brothers by their refusing to heed to his elderly advice. The lioness just smiled and told the kid, "No doubt, you have grown here on my milk. But you cannot help your nature."

“Shurosi kritavidyosi
darshaneeyosi putraka
yasmin kule tvamutpannah
Gajastatra na hanyate”

(Doubtless, you are brave, adept at learning, handsome to look at, but the species in which you are born in not the one that can kill an elephant.)
So also is the case with nations. Mere common residence in a particular territory cannot forge an unified national society with common character and qualities. The newcomers should bring about a total metamorphosis in their life-attitudes and take a rebirth, as it were, in that ancient national lineage.

The example of democratic England is instructive. Over a hundred years ago, some Germans settled there and were given the rights of citizenship. They were not looked upon as strangers. One of them came to our country as a servant of England and was employed as an ICS official in Madhya Pradesh. But when war broke out in 1914, he was promptly detained, lest his attachment to Germany be roused. On a mere suspicion, he was kept under detention. This is their mature and correct understanding of nationalism.

So too is the case with our nation. Mere common residence or birth and growth in our land cannot imply that the same loyalties, qualities and pattern of life exist amongst all its residents.

Call to Shake off Slavery

So, all that we say is that the Muslims and Christians here should give up their present foreign mental complexion and merge in the common stream of our national life.

Everybody knows that only a handful of Muslims came here as enemies and invaders. So also, only a few foreign Christian missionaries came here. Now the Muslims and Christians have enormously grown in number. They did not grow just by multiplication as in the case of fishes. They converted the local population. We can trace our ancestry to a common source, from where one portion was taken away from the Hindu fold and became Muslim and another became Christian. The rest could not be converted and they have remained as Hindus. Now, how did the converts leave their ancestral home? Was it out of their own sweet will and out of conviction of the superiority of those faiths? Well, history does not record a single notable instance of that sort.

On the contrary, history tells us that the reason was the fear of death or coercion or the various temptations of power, position, etc., or the desire to please the powers that be by adopting their ways and customs and finally even taking to their faiths. There was a lot of deception also. A piece of beef or a loaf used to be thrown into the water tank of a village and the villagers ignorant of what had happened, used to take the water as usual. On the next morning the missionary or the moulvi would come and declare that since they had used the polluted water they had all lost their religion and the only way left for them was to join his fold! In this way, whole villages have been converted to Islam in the North and to Christianity on the West Coast. This is deception, pure and simple. Thus it was the mad zeal for increasing one's numbers for political strategy under its grab. The foreign invader not only subjugated them politically and culturally but ultimately converted them to his faith. That too is

foreign domination. There are political, economic and cultural domination and this is religious domination.

It is our duty to call these our forlorn brothers, suffering under religious slavery for centuries, back to their ancestral home. As honest freedom-loving men, let them overthrow all signs of slavery and domination and follow the ancestral ways of devotion and national life. All types of slavery are repugnant to our nature and should be given up. This is a call for all those brothers to take their original place in our national life. And let us all celebrate a great Diwali on the return of those "prodigal sons" of our society. The parable of the "prodigal son" is to be found in the Bible. A son parted form his family taking away his portion of wealth. He lived extravagantly and became a pauper. He returned to his place, but not having the courage to go home, he stayed out of the precincts of the village. The old father who was on his way to his farm espied his son standing at a distance with his head hung in shame. The father immediately called him to his side, embraced him and exclaimed, "Oh, I am so happy that you have come back." He asked his other son to go home and arrange for a big feast. The other son was perplexed and asked his father, "Father, I have been here devoted to you all along. But you have never held a feast in my honour. This fellow has squandered away all his money and you intend to have a feast for him!" The father replied, "Look here, my boy, true, your brother had gone away for some time and I thought that I had lost a son. But now by the grace of God I have got back my son. Should we not love him as before and honour him? Should we not rejoice at his homecoming?"

So also we shall rejoice and offer our love and respect when all those our brethren who have been wandering for so many centuries outside our house come back to our fold. There is no compulsion here. This is only a call and request to them to understand things properly and come back and identify themselves with their ancestral Hindu way of life in dress,

customs, performing marriage ceremonies and funeral rites and such other things.

There are some people who claim that they have achieved unity of Hindus, Muslims, Christians and all others on the political and economic plane. But why limit the oneness only there? Why not make it more wide and more comprehensive so as to fuse them all in the Hindu way of life, in our dharma and take them back as lost brothers? To those who speak of unity on the political and economic plane, we say that we stand not only for political and economic unity but also for cultural and religious unity. We have thrown open our homes, our sanctuaries and temples, our age-old culture and heritage. Undoubtedly, this is a broader outlook.

Revive 'Parakrama-vad'

There are many who feel the same way in their heart of hearts. For example, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has written a forward to a Hindi book, Samskriti ke Char Adhyay, wherein he has given expression to his innermost feelings of intense love for the Hindu Culture-which he calls Bharatiya Culture-and intense desire to see it once again in all its pristine powers of assimilation. He has said that there had been two stages in our cultural history. In the first stage all the foreign races like Hunas and Shakas who came as invaders finally gave up their original customs and faiths and began calling themselves Rajputs. They all got absorbed in our fold gladly, spontaneously. Then we had the courage, strength and power of assimilation and absorbed them wholly in the great cultural current of our national life. We also took up whatever good points there were in them. Then, he says, the second stage came when invaders of a virulent character invaded our land and our people shut themselves up behind rules of 'do's and 'don't's, seeking protection in their rigid social structure. They thus

became narrow-minded, keeping aloof from all and segregated by themselves.

Unfortunately, he has mentioned only two stages. There is another painful aspect. Some of those who claimed to love Hindu Culture, finding it difficult to face the foreign onslaught, thought that they could protect it by surrendering themselves at the feet of the invaders and adopting their manners and customs. This has happened in the past. Fifty or sixty years ago a vazir of Hyderabad, a Hindu, was doing namaz five times every day like a most devout Muslim! This is sharanagati (surrender). If the first stage be called parakarma-vad (assimilation-ism) and the second, sankuchitata-vad (contraction-ism), then this can be called sharangati-vad (surrender-ism). Even today it is going on. Even in language, 33 per cent of English, 33 per cent of Persian words are introduced in our Army commands. Will such juxtapositions, calculations and mathematics bring about assimilation and ensure integrity of the people? This is nothing but appeasement, surrendering and kneeling down before the invaders. Because they have been intractable, this sharanagati-vad has caught the imagination of our people as a way out of the impasse.

We must revive once again the parakrama-vad. For that, we should make it clear that the non-Hindu who lives here has a rashtra dharma (national responsibility), a samaja dharma (duty to society), a kula dharma (duty to ancestors), and only in his vyakti dharma (personal faith) he can choose any path which satisfies his spiritual urge. If, even after fulfilling all those various duties in social life, anybody says that he has studied Quran Sherif or the Bible and that way of worship strikes a sympathetic chord in his heart, that he can pray better through that path of devotion, we have absolutely no objection. Thus he has his choice in a portion of his individual life. For the rest, he must be one with the national current. That is real assimilation.

That is how we had conducted ourselves in the past. We had always been hospitable. Any one was welcome to stay here. But all of them were required to act up to our national codes and conventions. Several centuries ago, when barbaric hordes of Arabs and Turks invaded Persia, some Parsis left their motherland and sailed forth with their Holy Fire and Holy Book and landed at Surat. King Yadava Rana welcomed them with open arms and consulted the Shankarachrya of Dwaraka Math as to how to accept them. They were asked to give up beef-eating, respect mother-cow as an object of national faith and live here in peace. These followers of Zaratushtra have kept up their promise even to this day. They live here with their religion intact, but have merged themselves wholly in the mainstream of national life.

Once Pandit Nehru had remarked at Jabalpur that there was no reason why we should not be able to absorb the Muslims even as we had assimialated in historical times the Hunas and the Shakas. Indisputably, this is the correct and the only way of integrating our national life.

This is our concept of Hindu Nation and our attitude towards the non-Hindus residing here-the only rational, practical and right approach.

In spite of this rational and positive approach, there are some who imagine that the concept of Hindu Nation is a challenge to the very existence of the Muslim and the Christian co-citizens and they will be thrown out and exterminated. Nothing could be more absurd or detrimental to our national sentiment. It is insult to our great and all-embracing cultural heritage. Do we not know, for example, that even in the latest powerful expression of Hindu resurgence under Shivaji, one of his army officers was a Ranadulla Khan? Later on, on the battlefield of Panipat in 1761, in that life-and-death struggle for the rising Hindu Swaraj, the key position of the Artillery Chief was held by one Ibrahim Gardi.

With such historical evidence and national traditions for the past thousands of years staring in our eyes, how strange that some persons still say that the non-Hindus live in peril if the Hindu Nation comes into its own!

The Bedrock of National Integration

Today we often hear our political leaders speaking of 'national integration', 'emotional integration' and so on. But what is that 'common emotion', that common basis on which all can come together? What are those eternal life-springs of our national life that go to make it unified, resurgent and glorious?

In the first place, feeling of burning devotion to the land, which, from times immemorial, we have regarded as our sacred Matrubhoomi,

-in the second place, the feeling of fellowship, of fraternity, born out of the realisation that we are the children of that one great common Mother,

-in the third place, the intense awareness of a common current of national life, born out of a common culture and heritage, of common history and traditions, of common ideals and aspirations,

-this trinity of values or, in a word, Hindu Nationalism, forms the bedrock of our national edifice.

12. Territorial Nationalism

TERRITORIAL NATIONALISM: ITS ROOTS

Much thought was devoted to the subject before the name 'Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh' was decided upon for the organisation. A number of persons close to the Sangh were also consulted. Naturally, many suggestions were put forth, and objections raised against each name. Even the present name was confronted with the objection that if the word 'Rashtriya' was adopted then its doors would have to be kept open to all other people in the country, i.e., Muslims, Christians, etc. So the name 'Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh' was suggested, as the organisation was restricted only to the Hindus.

Why 'Rashtriya ' and not 'Hindu'

Then why was the word 'Rashtriya' finally adopted in preference to the word 'Hindu'?

There is an instance, which correctly denotes the underlying viewpoint. In Bombay there is a locality known as 'Hindu Colony'. Some persons of that place thought that the foreign word 'colony' should be changed. They came together to change the name. Our revered founder, who was in Bombay at that time, was also invited. When he was asked for his opinion, he said, "More than the word 'colony' it is the word 'Hindu' that requires to be changed first." All those who had gathered, being very staunch Hindus, felt shocked. They asked, "How is it you, being a staunch Hindu, are opposed to the word 'Hindu'? Doctorji replied, 'I am not opposed to the word 'Hindu' as such. I am only opposed to its use in the present context, which denotes that in our own country the Hindus have formed a colony! How can there be a colony of

Hindus in Hindustan? If some Englishmen come, stay in a particular locality in Hindustan and call it a 'British Colony' it can be understood. So also it is, if you go to England, live in a particular locality and call it a 'Hindu Colony'. But a 'British Colony' in England an 'American Colony' in the United States and a 'Hindu Colony' in our land Hindusthan are all absurd. Either you accept that this is not your motherland and that you have come form somewhere outside and formed a colony here, or you change the name 'Hindu'. But they could not realise that there was something incongruous and absurd in having a 'Hindu Colony' in our own country. So the name continues even now.

From this we can realise why the word 'Rashtriya' and not 'Hindu' was used in naming the organisation. Doctorji used to say that in our land the word 'Rashtriya' naturally means 'Hindu' and therefore the word 'Hindu' need not be used. He would say, "If we use the word 'Hindu' it will only mean that we consider ourselves only as one of the innumerable communities in this land and that we do not realise our natural status as the nationals of this country." But, it is a fact that there is in our country quite an amount of misunderstanding about what 'nation' is, to which the Bombay incident is only a pointer.

The British Game

How did this misunderstanding creep in? During the last one thousand years, there bad been many foreign aggressions on our land. The invaders such as the Greeks, Hunas and the Shakas who came previously were either defeated and driven out or, if some of them stayed over, were absorbed in the Hindu Society. But the invaders who came during the last ten or twelve centuries could not be driven out. They could not be absorbed either. They remained a separate entity and ruled as foreigners in this land. The last rulers, the British, were ruling form several thousand miles away. Being shrewd, they knew that perpetuation of their

far-flung empire was possible only by knocking out from the minds of the people the faith, which gave them inspiration and strength to fight for freedom. What was that faith?

The British found that the average man here adores his motherland. The people here were blended together as an organic whole, though for the time being their unity was disrupted. A supreme sense of self-respect, love of freedom and devotion to their culture and traditions were ingrained in their blood. Knowing that such an indomitable spirit of nationalism would spell disaster to their empire, they planned systematically to undermine the faith of the people in their motherland, in their dharma and in their heritage.

There is an incident narrated by Lala Hardayal, one of our great revolutionaries. In the South, there was an English officer. His assistant was a local person, probably a Naidu. The orderly of that Englishman was a Brahmin. One day, when this Englishman was walking in a street, followed by his orderly, the assistant came form the opposite side. The two officers greeted each other and shook hands. But when the assistant officer saw the orderly, he took off his turban and touched his feet. The Englishman was amazed. He queried, "I am your senior officer, but you stand erect and just shake hands wih me, whereas he is only my peon and you prostrate before him on this busy road. What is the matter?" The Assistant officer replied, "You may be my officer, but you are a mlechha. He may be a peon, but he belongs to that class of my people which is held in great respect all down the centuries, before whom it is my duty to bow down." Letters are available, written by that Englishman to the India Office in England, relating all this and saying that unless the Englishman ousted the Brahmin from that position and occupied it himself, i.e., became as respectable or even more, his empire could not last long.

With that end in view, the Englishman began training us systematically in various ways. The first thing he taught was that this was one great 'continent' and not a country. He said that we are not one people and one nation. There were some aboriginals here staying for ages who had been driven away into the forsets and hills.There were also other types of aboriginals called the Dravidas. Aryans came form the North and with their superior strength of arms conquered this land and dominated over the rest. That is, we were told we had no motherland, that most of us had come form somewhere outside and therefore were equally strangers and foreigners to this country. We were also told we had no dharma, no philosophy, no morals worth the name, that all our past life was just one of unrelieved darkness, that the coming of the English here was 'divine dispensation', for we could learn sitting at their feet the first lessons in culture, religion and orderly social and political life.

The imperialist designs of Macaulay, the brain behind the system of English education, were trumpeted aloud: "We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and millions whom we govern-a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect." And again, in 1836, he wrote to his father, "No Hindu who has received an English education ever remains sincerely attached to his religion.. If our plans of education are followed up there will not be a single idolater among the respectable classes in Bengal 30 years hence." Even to this day, the same insidious indoctrination of young minds is carried on in the Christian convents here-that there is no real Saviour other than Jesus Christ, that the Hindu religion is only a mass of superstitions, that without taking to Christianity they would all be doomed to eternal damnation and so on.

History Distorted

There used to be a book of history for schoolboys, wherein the history of all our ancient emperors and kings was summed up under the title "Tanglewood Tales", i.e., a period of all confusion and darkness. And then, in that confusion and darkness, says that 'historian', the Aryans came, first settled down in Punjab where the battle of Mahabharata took place. Then they proceeded towords the Ganga and Yamuna and settled down in Ayodhya. So he had concluded that several centuries after the story of Mahabharata came the story of Ramayana! I appreciated that 'historian's' ingenuity! Indeed it requires an uncommon genius to discover that the father was born after the son! The entire history of our country thus comprised the 'dark ages' at the start and the later portion was divided into Muslim period and the British period.All these things were being taught right from our childhood and no wonder many of our people believed that we had no national life and nothing great whatsoever.

Even after the Britishers have left, we find in our school text-books, our history divided into Hindu Period, Muslim Period and British Period implying the same old poisonous theory of the Britisher that Hindu in this land stand on the same footing as the Muslim and the British. The fact that the history of Bharat is one long Hindu Period, sometimes in a free and glorious condition and sometimes struggling with the foreign invaders in the cause of national freedom and honour, and that periods in history are known after the nationals and not after foreign usurpers and dictates masquerading as kings, is not recognised even today.

‘A Nation in the Making’

It was no wonder that the so-called educated Hindu fell a prey to the trap laid by the Britisher. He begun to dress and speak like an Englishman. He began to feel ashamed of his ancestors and his past heritage. Some time ago a startling instance of those days had appeared in dharma-yug, a prominent Hindi weekly. Three

gentlemen --an Irishman, a Scotchman and a prominent Hindu leader (Pt. Motilal Nehru.) once stayed in a hotel in Europe. In the visitors' book, while referring to their nationalities, the first wrote, 'I am proud to be born in Ireland'; the second person expressed his good fortune to be born as a Scotchman; and the third, the Hindu, wrote, "I consider it a result of my past sins that I am born in a Hindu Brahmin family!"

In such an atmosphere it was natural that the English educated believed that all the centuries of our past life having been one of ignorance and internecine quarrels, we were to start afresh as a nation. In the early days of our freedom struggle against the Britisher, we find in the speeches of many top-ranking leaders the expression "we are a nation in the making" which mean, we are not yet formed into a nation. Even today many leaders say that we are a melting pot, that we are yet to give shape and content to our national life, and so on.

Another theory, which caught their imagination was that since all those residing in this land were under the common danger of a foreign rule, that common danger resulted in forging them all into a new nationality. It is well known that a common danger can build up a nationality which already exists at least in a seed from but cannot create it de novo. It can only rouse and strengthen a nation but cannot create an entirely new one. It infuses into the nation a spirit of unity and sacrifice born out of the will to resist and defy the foreign aggressors. That is all the implication of the theory of common danger. And here it was sought to be applied to achieve new nationality altogether.

Absurdity of ‘Territorial Concept’

They forgot that here was already a full-fledged ancient nation of the Hindus and the various communities which were living in the country were here either as guests, the jews and Paris, ar as

invaders, the Muslim and Christians. They never faced the question how all such hetrogeneous groups could be called as children of the soil merely because, by an accident, they happened to reside in a common territory under the rule of a common enemy.

During one of our meetings in those days,a gentleman emphatically stated that whoever resided in this country must be considered as our national. I asked him, "Residing for how long?" He said, "there is no time limit for that. "Even for a day?" I asked. He replied, "Yes," Thereupon I remarked, "Then rejoice! We have won swaraj. We have won an empire! There is no need any more for all the trials and tribulations of freedom struggle. For according to your definition the present Prime Minister of England, Ramsay MacDonald, is a national of our land, as he was here for quite a few days. So it means that it is we who are ruling over England and not vice versa!" Such is the extent of absurd and perverse conclusions to which the 'serai theory' of territorial nationalism leads us.

The theories of territorial nationalism and of common danger, which formed the basis of our concept of a nation, had deprived us of the positive and inspiring content of our real Hindu Nationhood and made many of the 'freedom movements' virtually anti-British movements. Anti-Britishism was equated with patriotism and nationalism. This reactionary view has had disastrous effects upon the entire course of the freedom struggle, its leaders and the common people.

TERRITORIAL NATIONALISM: ITS FRUITS

Revolutionaries turned traitors--Congress turned reactionary--Nature of non-Hindu communities--Muslim appeasement--Hindus

exhorted for self-annihilation--Leadership, a tragic curse--Malady continuing--Correct the initial blunder.

In main, two types of movements rose up against the British rule in our country. One was the armed revolution resorted to by the revolutionaries and the other, passive resistance led by the Indian National Congress. Let us consider the effects of 'anti-Britishism' on the two separately.

Patriots Turned Traitors

The revolutionary leaders had forged a wide network of secret cells, arsenals and a band of fiery patriotic heroes ready to sacrifice their lives. But some traitor here or there used to betray their secrets and their best guarded and calculated plans would come to grief. When a person strives time and again but does not succeed, he looks around to see if there is anybody who, following the same method, has been successful. This being the human tendency, the revolutionaries wanted an example of some successful revolution to emulate.

Among them, those who had the positive grasp of our national life looked for such a revolutionary inspiration within the country, within our own history, just as a Savarkar and Subash Chandra Bose were inspired by the ideal of Shivaji. Subash Chandra Bose, in one of his last interviews before he disappeared from our country, had spoken highly about the greatness of Shivaji and had even declared that we could achieve swaraj only by following the ideals and methods of Shivaji.

But those who had not that grasp, that positive abiding conviction of our nationhood, but were goaded only by intense antagonism to the British rule, looked everywhere except into their own past. They found that there was a successful revolution in Russia in 1917, which had overthrown the old Czarship and the feudal

system and had established 'people's regime', as it was called. Many of our revolutionaries were so much enamoured of it that they sought to bring about a revolution based on Communist ideology and Communist methods. The result was that those who started as devotees of our freedom have now turned into devotees of Communism and of the Russian and Chinese leadership. They are now fighting to 'liberate' our country form ourselves and enslave it to Russia and China. We therefore see that those who were willing to lay down their lives for the freedom of our motherland are now equally willing to lay down their lives for making our motherland a satellite of Russia or China. Those who were once swadeshabhaktas of the intense burning type have now become equally intense paradeshabhaktas. What a degradation!

The Congress Debacle

The other movement led by the Congress has had more disastrous and degrading effects on the country. Most of the tragedies and evils that have overtaken our country during the last few decades and are even today corroding our national life are its direct outcome.

The congress leaders, when faced with the might of the British empire, felt that their strength was too little. To make up for their weakness they began to look around if some other countries would come to their aid. The revolutionaries too had tried that method. But foreign powers do not rush to the help of weaker people unless there is a chance of their own self-interest being fulfilled. Some of the top-ranking leaders of Congress approached Amir Amanullah of Afghanistan for help. The plan was that the Amir should invade our country synchronising with our uprising from within and help us to drive out the British. As a recompense for his help he was promised that in the place of the British he would be accepted as our Suzerain! But the British, shrewd as they were, came to know of the plot, put these leaders in detention

and contrived by their skilful diplomacy to overthrow the supremacy of Amanullah in Afghanistan itself!

When this attempt failed, the Congress leaders thought that at least a united front of all those who lived here should be forged against the British. That was also in line with their notion of nationalism. Apart from the Hindu People, there were four communities living here-the Jew, the Parsi, the Christian and the Muslim.

There was no difficulty about the Hindus. They naturally love this country as their sacred motherland. Since hoary times they have built up a great culture and heritage here. They have given rise to great men of thought and action in all walks of life and in all parts of the country. Therefore the whole land, from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari, is scared to them. They want this land to be free from foreign domination. Even their scriptures command them to aspire for freedom. The spirit of freedom in ingrained in their very blood. As a result, they had never taken foreign domination for granted even in the past and were striking at its shackles time and again with varying degrees of success.

Jews, Parsis, Christians

Then there were the Jews and Parsis who had come here as refugees. The Jews were ignored as they were very few. The parsis, though small in number, were an intelligent, industrious and prosperous community. But to a large extent, they had merged in the mainstream of the Hindu life here. They had developed intense love for our motherland and were in the forefront of our freedom struggle. Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah Mehta and Madame Cama became symbols of inspiration for all freedom fighters.

Then came the question of the Christian gentlemen here. During the war of Independence in 1857, some bishops here had raised platoons to help the British Government in suppressing the uprising. Since then, they were always on the side of the British who, after all, belonged to their own faith. The British too were helping the Christian missionary activities in various ways. Vast jungle and hill areas were specially chosen, as for example the Chhota Nagpur area and the Naga territory, where only the Christian missionaries were sent and their borders sealed to all other religious preachers. There was a natural co-ordination between the local Christians, the Christian Missions and the British Government. So, in general, the Christians kept themselves aloof from the freedom struggle.

The Leadership on Trial

Then came the question of Muslims. They had come here as invaders. They were conceiving themselves as conquerors and rulers here for the last twelve hundred years. That complex was still in their mind. History has recorded that their antagonism was not merely political. Had it been so, they could have been won over in a very short time. But it was so deep-rooted that whatever we believed in, the Muslim was wholly hostile to it. If we worship in the temple, he would desecrate it. If we carry on bhajans and car festivals, that would irritate him. If we worship cow, he would like to eat it. If we glorify woman as a symbol of sacred motherhood, he would like to molest her. He was tooth and nail opposed to our way of life in all aspects-religious, cultural, social, etc. He had imbibed that hostility to the very core. His number also was not small. Next to the Hindu's, his was the largest.

Our leaders, were therefore faced with the problem of weaning these people away form their hostile mood and bringing them to the patriotic ranks. There was a very rational and patriotic way of approach. That was to tell them frankly: "Dear friends, the days of

old Moghul Badshahi have passed. Now both of us will have to live ultimately as brothers here, as co-sharers in this national life. After all, you also belong to the same race as ours, to the same blood of ours, but converted to Islam at the point of sword by those Moghul, Turk and other foreign races. Now, there is no point in your continuing to associate yourself mentally with those foreign aggressors and trying to follow in their footsteps. Forget all such separatist memories, merge yourself in the life of this soil. Hereafter try to respect and follow the examples of the great sons of this land who fought for the freedom and honour of our motherland and our culture." Then matters would have been very simple. Such instances have happened all over the world. For instance, the Normans entered England as aggressors. The local people stood up against them to defend their freedom. But later, both of them merged together and faced all future aggressions as one united people. And they have continued to live a unified life even to this day.

Sowing Seeds of Self-Destruction

But, to tell the pugnacious fighting Mussalman that his forefathers were Hindus, that he should return to the Hindu fold as a self-respecting man, that he should give up his aggressive mode of the Moghul days and wake up to the realities of the present century and merge in the national current of life - to tell all this required an unshakable conviction in the supremacy of truth and indomitable courage to face the hard realities of the situation. But, unfortunately, both these qualities, uncompromising love for truth and fearlessness, are really wanting in many of the leading personalities of these days.

There is before us that famous instance of Maulana Mohammed Ali, once known as the 'right hand' of Mahatma Gandhi and a devout Muslim. He was the President-elect at the Kakinada

session of Congress in 1923. The renowned songster-patriot Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar had come there to sing the national anthem Vande Mataram. Just as the session was about to commence, when he came forward to sing Vande Mataram, Maulana Saheb stopped him saying, "No, you cannot sing that song. It revolts against the spirit of our religion." But the stout-heated Paluskar refused to be cowed down. He said that he had come expressly for that purpose and he would discharge his duty. In anger Maulana Saheb left the place and stayed away when the national anthem was being sung! There was not a single courageous soul among the whole crowd of leaders assembled there that had the guts to tell him, "Janab, this is our national anthem. Being the President of the National Congress, you should not object to its singing. You should not allow other considerations to come in the way of patriotism." On the contrary, portions of Vande Mataram were thereafter dropped to appease Muslim fanaticism.

Thus, it was due to the utter lack of will and conviction on the part of our leaders to face the Muslim intransigence squarely from the standpoint of undiluted nationalism, that the seeds of appeasement of Muslims were sown. In their phantom chase of achieving a new unity and a new nationality, our leaders raised the slogan of 'Hindu-Muslim unity' and declared that anything that stood in its way should be forgotten. As they dared not tell the Muslim to forget his separatism, they pitched upon the docile Hindu for all their preachings. The first thing they preached was, that our nationality could not be called Hindu, that even our land could not be called by its traditional name Hindusthan, as that would offend the Muslim. The name 'India' given by the British was accepted. Taking that name, the 'new nation' was called the 'Indian Nation.' And the Hindu was asked to rename himself as 'Indian'.

Hindu-the Sacrificial Goat

The exhortation of the leaders did not stop at that. The Hindu was asked to ignore, even to submit meekly, to the vandalism and atrocities of the Muslims. In effect, he was told: "Forget all that the Muslims have done in the past and all that they are now doing to you. If your worshipping in the temple, or your taking out gods in procession in the streets irritates the Muslims, then don't do it. If they carry away your wives and daughters, let them. Do not obstruct them. That would be violence!" To cite an instance, in those days a Hindu girl was abducted by a Muslim in NWFP and the problem was posed before the Central Assembly where our prominent leaders were present. A Muslim Congress leader lightly brushed aside the incident saying, "After all boys are boys and girls are girls." At that insulting remark not one of the Hindu leaders present there raised a voice of protest. None dared to ask why, if it was just a case of boys and girls, it always happened that the Muslim boys kidnapped only Hindu girls and not Muslim girls? On the other hand they enjoyed the remark as a piece of humour!

Whenever the Muslims slaughtered cows to insult Hindu feelings, the Hindus were told that it was the religious right of Muslims and that, being tolerant to other religions, they should not object to it. Although there is not a word of sanctions in Quran for cow-slaughter, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had given the Muslims a written assurance that on the advent of swaraj cow-slaughter would not be banned keeping in view their 'religious sentiments'.

Once a notable Hindu personality of those days, in a largely attended public meetings, declared: "There is no swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity and the simplest way in which this unity can be achieved is for all Hindus to become Muslims!" He did not

even realise that then it would not be Hindu-Muslim unity but only Muslim unity as there would be no Hindu left at all!

It was carried to such extent, that self-forgetfulness was taught to the Hindus. They were taught to forget their glorious history, to forget Rana Pratap, Shivaji, Guru Govind Singh and all such inspiring names and, if at all their memory did intrude, to call them 'misguided patriots'. In fact, history was 'invented' to suit their slogans of Hindu-Muslim unity. To give an example of one such invention, a well-known scholar of our country has written that there is hardly an Islam! Is this invention not something 'super-Einsteinian' in its originality? And all this was supposed to be for the achievement of 'Hindu-Muslim unity' and therefore of swaraj! The credulous and freedom-loving Hindu believed in all that and prepared himself to sacrifice his Hindu-hood, all his age-old ideals, heritage and aspirations, as he was told by his leaders that without Hindu-Muslim unity swaraj could not be achieved! One prominent leader had gone to the extent of saying that he would not accept even swasraj without Hindu-Muslim unity!

In other words, the Hindu was told that he was imbecile, that he had no spirit, no stamina to stand on his own legs and fight for the independence of his motherland and that all this had to be injected into him in the form of Muslim blood. What a shame, what a misfortune that our own leaders should have come forward to knock out the ancient and indomitable faith in ourselves and destroy our spirit of self-confidence and self-reliance, which is the very life-breath of a people! Those who declared 'No swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity' have thus perpetrated the greatest treason on our society. They have committed the most heinous sin of killing the life-spirit of a great and ancient people. To preach impotency to a society which gave rise to a Shivaji who, in the words of the great historian Jadunath Sarkar, 'proved to the whole world that the Hindu has drunk the elixir of immortality', and to break the self-confident and proud spirit of such a great and virile

society has no parallel in the history of the world for the sheer magnitude of its betryal.

The Bitter Fruit

The direct result was that Hindus were defeated at the hands of Muslim in 1947. And who were these Muslims? The overwhelming majority of them were those who were converted to Islam at the point of sword or by temptations of power and pelf. That is, they were the progeny of that section of our society, which had not the mental stamina or the self-respect to stand up in defence of their swadesh and swadharma but preferred to join the enemy camp to save their skin. And we, children of heroic ancestors of peerless valour who for centuries braved and stamped out waves after waves of the invading hordes of Muslims, accepted defeat at the hands of such a people!

And what a disgraceful defeat at that! During the last one thousands years of our struggle with those aggressors never had we accepted their sovereign rights over any part of this land. Even when they held sway over vast portions of our country as in the times of Akbar and Aurangzeb not a day passed without a Rana Pratap, a Guru Govind Singh, a Chhatrasal or a Shivaji challenging them and asserting our national freedom. The same inspiring tradition of freedom struggle continued unabated during the rule of the Britishers also. However, for the first time in 1947, we gave up the fight, put an ignoble end to the glorious one-thousand-year-long struggle for national freedom, surrendered all our rights and acquiesced in an unchallenged domination of the aggressor over huge portions of our land.

That was the bitter fruit of the continuous draining out of the spirit of self-confidence form the Hindus by the suicidal slogan of 'no swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity' indulged in by our leaders.

Nemesis Overtakes

No other people in the world have so far been so singularly unfortunate as we Hindus in this regard. The leaders of various peoples have always striven their utmost to infuse self-confidence, to rekindle the drooping spirit among, their people and to make them virile and conquering in the face of enemies. But here, we had leaders who were, as if, pledged to sap all manliness form their own people. However, this is not a mere accident of history. This leadership only came as a bitter climax of the despicable tribe of so many of our ancestors who during the past twelve hundred years sold their national honour and freedom to foreigners, and joined hands with the inveterate enemies of our country and our religion in cutting the throats of their own kith and kin to gratify their personal egoism, selfishness and rivalry. No wonder nemesis overtook such a people in the form of such self-destructive leadership.

Appeasement Whets Appetite

Well, did these leaders succeed, though at such a terrible cost, in realising their dream of Hindu-Muslim unity? No! The more our leaders tried to appease the Muslims, the more their separatist and aggressive appetite was whetted. The British too set about to sharpen their separatist teeth and claws in a bid to set them against the nationalist forces. Thus Muslims were placed in a position in which they were wanted by both the British and the nationalist and their price was rising higher and higher.

In 1857, Surendranath Banerjee wrote in his diary that in order that congress may not appear to be purely a Hindu body, they tried their best to bring in Muslims and even offered fares and other facilities to them to attend the Congress sessions and that in spite of all these, very few Muslims came.

During the freedom struggle, Pandit Nehru had once undertaken in his home province a big campaign of 'Muslim mass contact' to win them over to our side. But the result was that Muslim League began to grow there in leaps and bounds and that very province, i.e., U.P., became the spearhead of disruptionist Muslim movement.

Even as early as 1917, Congress had, in the Lucknow Pact, acceded to separate electorates for Muslims. Later, the Communal Award of 1931 allotted 33.33 per cent seats to Muslims in the Central Legislature, though they formed only 24 per cent of the total population. In addition, Muslims were given 'statutory' majority in Punjab and Bengal, where the Muslim population figures were boosted in the Census to appear as more than those of Hindus. And again, the number of seats reserved for Muslims was far in excess of even those boosted population figures. In the other provinces where Muslims were in a minority they were awarded weightage. By that they got far greater representation than what their population warranted. Still their demands went on mounting. In 1946, when the Central Interim Ministry was formed, the Muslims were given 'parity' with the 'caste Hindus' thus driving a wedge among the Hindus. Finally their price rose to such a pitch that they not only got two big slices of this land where they live today as complete masters with plans to conquer the rest of our country, but also continue to remain here in sufficient numbers to act as potential fifth-column.

The Blasted Slogan

The partition of our country simultaneously with the quitting of the British and the advent of swaraj, gave the lie direct to the slogan 'No swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity'. In fact, the relations between the Hindus and Muslims were never so bitter and estranged as in those years of 1946 and 1947. Millions of families were uprooted from their ancestral homes; province after

province turned crimson by the flow of rivers of blood; and death, destruction and disgrace scarred the faces of crores of innocent human beings. Even the normal social intercourse, which had existed between the two for ages was shattered during that period. It was precisely at that hour the British quit this land. In what words shall we describe 'the farsightedness and statesmanship' of those leaders who had proclaimed, 'No swaraj without Hindu-Muslim unity'!

The Corrective

Even to this day, after the British have quit the land, we are witnessing the disastrous effects of the reactionary and perverted concept of nationalism. It is a matter of common experience that even a slight aberration at the start in taking a particular course leads one in course of time to an altogether different destination. Further, if a man commits a mistake once, he tends to persist in it. Any advice from others to give up the mistaken course only irritates him and makes him stick to it all the more obstinately. To err is human but to persist in proved and established error is un-human. The quality of rational human being is to acknowledge one's mistake and correct it with all humility with the firm resolve never to repeat the mistake. But unfortunately, our leaders are not prepared to revise and correct their territorial concept of nationalism which has led to the unprecedented tragedy of partition of our motherland, with all its continuing and growing dangers, and the uprooting of over two crores of our brethren resulting in their indescribable miseries of desolation, distress and dishonour.

This is the price we have paid and we are even now paying for the wrong and unnatural concept of nation that we have adopted. Nor could anything better have been expected to flow out of that. The concept of territorial nationalism has verily emasculated our

nation and what more can we expect of a body deprived of its vital energy?

Once in the zoology section of a college the students planned to crack a joke with their old professor. They removed the legs of a water-bug and joined the legs of another species to it. They brought it to their professor and asked him in a puzzled tone, "Sir, we could not make out what this is. What new type of bug is it?" The old professor examined it under a microscope and remarked gravely, "How is it, boys, you do not know such a simple common bug as this? The name of this bug is 'humbug'!"

It was this 'humbug' type of nationalism that was attempted to be vivified. It is like attempting to create a novel animal by joining the head of a monkey and the legs of a bullock to the main body of an elephant! It can only result in a hideous corpse. It cannot be a living body. If at all some activity is seen in that body it is only of the germs and bacteria breeding in that decomposing corpse. And so it is that we see today the germs of corruption, disintegration and dissipation eating into the vitals of our nation for having given up the natural living nationalism in the pursuit of an unnatural, unscientific and lifeless hybrid-concept of territorial nationalism.

Therefore, if we are to rise again as a nation, we must correct the initial blunder, which we committed in accepting the newfangled idea of nationalism which experience has proved to be absolutely false and ruinous. Let us not be deluded into a wrong track by the wily propaganda of interested persons. We have been sufficiently fooled uptill now by their exhortation that we Hindus, who are having a great philosophy of human brotherhood, catholicity of spirit and so on, should not narrow ourselves by the talk of Hindu Nationalism and all such 'communal', 'medieval' and 'reactionary' ideas! We must be able to see through the game and revert to the truth of our nationalism as an ancient fact and the Hindus being

the national society of Bharat, so clearly restated by our revered founder when he decided the word 'Rashtriya' for our organisation. We must once again stand up in our true and full stature and boldly assert that we shall elevate the Hindu National Life in Bharat to the peak of glory and honour which has been its birthright since hoary time.

13. Call for Courage of Conviction

We are witnessing a strange phenomenon in our country today. The real and positive concept of Hindu Nationalism is being dubbed as communal, reactionary, narrow-minded and so on and the unscientific, reactionary and harmful theory of territorial nationalism, upheld by our present-day leaders, is paraded as 'secular', 'progressive' and 'broad-minded'. But, apart form this cloud of political dust that has been raised, is it true that in their heart of hearts the so-called 'secularists' differ fundamentally from us?

At Heart All Accept, But.!

Today very eminent personalities of our country extol the greatness of what they call 'Indian' philosophy, 'Indian' art etc. They say, 'The highest flights of Indian philosophy are to be found in the Upanishads', 'Kalidasa is the finest gem of Indian literature', and so on. They declare that the unique contribution of 'Indian' thought to mankind is its genius to see unity in diversity and its spirit of respect towards all faiths and religions on the face of the earth. But, what do all these statements really convey? Is there anything 'Indian' other than what is "Hindu" in all this?

Once a prominent leader suggested to us, "Of course, we have no objection to what you propound regarding the Hindu Nation and all that. But why not put the same diplomatically as 'Bhartiya' instead of Hindu, as the later appears offensive these days?" And he also quoted the famous Sanskrit axiom, no brooyat stayam apriyam (one should not utter unpleasant truth.) What a fine way of circumventing truth! In fact, the correct meaning of that phrase is otherwise. It is not that the unpleasant truth should be suppressed; it would only amount to supporting falsehood. Truth must be told but in a sweet manner. The truth is, that thought for

which we stand is correctly and unambiguously described by the word 'Hindu'. Though 'Bharatiya' also should connote the same meaning, the way in which it is used by our leaders today lands one in confusion and leads one away form the truth. So, we decide not to dilute the truth to please or appease anybody. We do not also stoop to offensive language while propagating this truth. We take our stand on the pure and positive content of our national life and view all our national problems in that clear light.

This truth of Hindu Nationalism has been imprinted on all minds, though some may not say it in so many words. Take the instance of Somnath. When the temple of Somnath was renovated and there was the consecration ceremony, many great leaders and scholars of our country had gone there, including our former President Dr. Rajendra Prasad of hallowed memory. What was the burden of his speech on that occasion? He said that by rebuilding Somnath, we were wiping out the stains of twelve hundred years of slavery', who were those enslavers that he had in mind? Who had broken the temple of Somnath? Clearly, the Muslims. To whom was it a point of honour and devotion? The answer is very clear - to the Hindus. It is one of their Jyotirlingas. The devastation of that temple was an insult to the majesty of the Hindu People and by rebuilding it, we have re-established that majesty and wiped out the stains of foreign aggression, i.e., the aggression of the Muslims. In that one sentence, he has unequivocally stated that the Hindu has been the resident of this country form times immemorial, that his is the national existence here and that it is only by the restoration of the objects of his worship that the stains of all foreign aggression in the country will wiped out.

So, we see that even those who talk of 'broad-minded' outlook have the same beliefs we have - though they do not express it straightway. They take a roundabout way, but in the end, come to the same conclusion about the solid fact of Hindu Rashtra and

about the real nature of the non-Hindu communities living in our country, especially the Muslims, who are uppermost in their minds.

Once a leading Congress worker said to me, "You see, we can not go on saying that this is Hindu Rashtra and all that very plainly, because there are four crores of Muslims living in this land and, in the event of Pakistan doing something against us, all these four crores of Muslims may join hands with the Pakistanis." In reply, I just asked him," Then, what has become of your slogan 'Hindu-Muslim bhai-bhai'? Is it not very clear from your present statement that all those phrases were born not out of any genuine feeling but out of fear of the Muslims?" Of course, he could not reply because that was a fact. It is this fear complex in the minds of those who call themselves 'secular', 'broad-minded' etc. that makes them say, "Let us not say 'Hindu' which will offend the Muslims into becoming hostile to us." But the hostility is there. They only want to appease them into not behaving in a hostile manner.

Story and the Moral

There is an interesting story in the Mahabharata. Once, while the Pandavas with their mother Kunti were moving about incognito, they happened to come to a place called Ekachakrapuri. There they came to know that the town was under the control of a terrific demon called Baka. Once, when he was about to destroy the whole of the town, the people had entreated him saying, "Do not kill us all now. In return for this favour, we will send you every day a cart-load of rice and other edibles, two buffaloes yoked to the cart and the driver for your food." These were the terms of the agreement.

Now, the next part of the story is very interesting and illuminating. Kunti asked the people not to worry by saying that

she would be sending one of her five sons who was capable of destroying that Rakshasa. Accordingly Bhima was sent. He went with a cart-load of food to the place of Baka and shouted aloud, "Hello! Where are you? Baka, come on, I have brought your food." He let loose the buffaloes and began to eat the food himself with great relish. Bakasura was amazed to see that sight. Till then, nobody had dared to call him by name. They would tremble, bewail their fate and would only wait for death. Bakasura's surprise grew into annoyance when he saw his 'prey' feasting upon his own food! Furious with rage, he dashed towards Bhima and began showering blows on him. But this gentleman continued to eat saying, "Wait a bit, let me eat"! After he had finished everything, he said, "Now, come on. You have been troubling these poor people for so many days. The time has now come for us to settle the accounts." And we know how Bhima settled the account! On the next morning the people saw to their utter relief the corpse of the dreaded Bakasura sprawling at the entrance gate of the town.

These are the two ways of dealing with the aggressor. In both these ways, the awareness that he is an aggressor and is hostile is there. So, whether our people go about saying that we will give five per cent seats, fifteen per cent seats, we will give parity, we will partition the land and so on, or they stand up and say, "Come on, and let us settle accounts", in both these attitudes, there is the same awareness regarding his real nature of hostility.

Thus we find that even though some people may call us communal and all that, still their beliefs and our beliefs are the same. Only, we have the courage to say the truth, whereas they try to appease and propitiate out of fear, of course, under the garb of 'broad-mindedness', 'secularism' and so on. That is all. No other difference. The conclusion that we arrive at is that all those communities which are staying in this land and yet are not true to their salt, have not imbibed its culture, do not lead the life which

this land has been unfolding for so many centuries, do not believe in its philosophy, in its national heroes and in all that this land has been standing for, are, to put it briefly, foreign to our national life. And the only real, abiding and glorious national life in this holy land of Bharat has been of the Hindu People.

Remember, Conviction is There!

In fact, the conviction of our true nationhood has been ingrained in our blood since hoary times. Even to this day that conviction is there in the heart of every son of this soil, though sometimes lying dormant.

In about the year 1920, Dr. Moonje, who was in those days a great Congress leader, accompanied by Dr. Hedgewar, came to Madras on his way to meet Sri Aurobindo in Pondicherry. Dr. Moonje travelled in first-class and Doctorji travelled in third-class almost as his attendant. When the train stopped at the previous station, Doctorji entered Dr. Moonje's compartment to pack up his luggage. But before be could complete that, the train started. When the train reached Madras station, a Ticket Inspector said that he would charge Dr. Hedgewar for illegally travelling in first-class with only a third-class ticket. Dr. Moonje tried to explain, but finding the Ticket Inspector obstinate, he snapped angrily, "Well, do you not believe me? I am the master of the Railway because I pay the fare. You are after all a servant. You get out." The ticket Inspector also got infuriated and said, "Who are you to tell me? This is no Muslim country, you get out." Hearing that, both the Doctors had a hearty laugh! Why did he say so? Because, Dr Moonje had a long beard and the Ticket Inspector mistook him to be a Muslim. Even an ordinary average man spontaneously feels that this is not a Muslim country.

Many years ago, Govindrao Kale, the ambassador of the Peshwa at the court of the Nizam, came to know that the Peshwa had

crossed the Sindhu and had carried his victorious sword right up to Kabul. In his letter of congratulations, he wrote, " I am so very happy that the Bhagawa Dhwaj has crossed the Sindhu once again, that all Muslim power has been shattered and that from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari, this is 'Hindustan', and not a 'Turkistan'." Equally with that astute diplomat of a great Hindu Kingdom about 150 years ago, an ordinary Ticket Inspector now also expressed the same conviction that this was no Muslim country. This is the truth.

Even Truth Requires 'Proof'

Unfortunately, some eminent personalities have tried to lay upon this truth a mass of illusion and falsehood and are trying to make the Hindus forget that they are the nation. Even falsehood if repeated incessantly will have its effect on weak minds. As the story goes, poor Brahmin was once carrying a lamb in his arms. Three thieves, with a plan to knock it off, successively met the Brahmin and accosted him with the derisive exclamation how a pious Brahmin like him was carrying a dog in his arms. The credulous Brahmin brushed off the suggestion of the first, began to doubt at its repetition by the second and finally believed in it when the third repeated it again. He then threw away the lamb, which, of course, was taken charge of by the thieves.

Let us not shut our eyes to the historical fact that it was the scheming Britisher who, in order to perpetuate his stranglehold on our country, planted in our minds perverted notions of nationhood in a bid to break the proud and defiant spirit of the Hindus, which alone could have posed a real threat to his domination. Even to this day, do we not see that there are forces inside and outside our country, which would stand to profit by the subversion of this pure and intense spirit of nationalism as that alone could effectively frustrate all their evil designs? And knowingly, or unknowingly, our people are also being swept off their feet by

their insidious propaganda designed to land us on a suicidal track. It is our scared duty, therefore, to re-establish the truth of our Hindu Nationhood, to remove all the debris of falsehood and make every Hindu realise his proud heritage of being a living limb of this great Hindu Nation.

But, how can it be done? We know as a matter of hard experience that even truth requires to be proved, it needs sanction. Our Shastras have described that sanction as Nigrahanugaha-kshama-shakti - a strength that upholds the good and destroys the evil. We know that in the Bhagavad-Gita, in the very first chapter, Arjuna comes forward with his doubts. The next chapter is a complete answer. After that, Sri Krishna goes on explaining what he has propounded in the second chapter. But Aujuna is not satisfied. Ultimately, when Sri Krishna manifests his colossal Vishwaroopa, he readily says, "Yes, I now understand." After that, he has no more queries about the fundamental theories of life. After the eleventh chapter we find Arjuna extremely receptive. Why? Because of the manifestation of that unbounded power of Vishwaroopa standing as the sanction behind all the divine precepts he had heard from Sri Krishna till then.

Once, we invited a prominent Congress leader(* Shri Kailash Nath Katzu) -- who later became an important Central Cabinet Minister -- to preside over one of our functions at Delhi. He accepted the invitation. His friends in Congress tried to dissuade him saying that being a Congressman he should not associate himself with a 'communal' organisation like the RSS. But he assured them that he would not compromise his principles. He came. He saw several thousands of the Sangh swayamsevaks in excellent trim and uniform. A huge audience of about three lakhs was also present, maintaining perfect order and silence. After the introductory talk he stood up to give his presidential speech. He said, "To whom else, if not the Hindus, does this land of Hindustan belong? And whose life, if not of Hindus, is the

national life of this soil?" Next day, his speech appeared in the newspapers. He was naturally pestered with objections from his Congress colleagues. It is reported that he replied to them, "None of you would have spoken anything different had you also seen that sight!" And he was right too. The living manifestation of the power of Hindu Nation in the form of thousands of well-disciplined, devoted swayamsevaks standing before him reawakened the dormant conviction in his heart about our true nationhood.

Therefore, the foremost duty laid upon every Hindu is to huild up such a holy, benevolent and unconquerable might of our Hindu People in support of the age-old truth of our Hindu Nationhood. Our scriptures tell us that self-forgetfulness is adharma and awakening to the knowledge of one's true self is dharma. Thus the path of re-establishment of dharma shown by all our great masters of the past is clearly the awakening of the Hindu People to the truth of their National Self-the glorious, effulgent Hindu Nationhood.

14. Uniqueness of Hindu Rashtra

HINDU RASHTRA AND "MINORITIES"

Give up notions of "religious minority"-Example of Indonesia, Turkey, etc.-Benevolent tradition of Hindu Rashtra -Examples.

The answer to the so-called problem of 'religious minorities' can be found only in the historically correct, rational and positive approach of Hindu Rashtra. Otherwise, the so-called minorities are bound to become more and more hardened in their separate shells of religion and turn into a dreadful source of disruption of our body-politic.

So, all that is expected of our Muslim and Christan co-citizens is the shedding of the notions of their being 'religious minorities' as also their foreign mental complexion and merging themselves in the common national stream of this soil. As far as the national tradition of this land is concerned, it never considers that with a change in the method of worship, an individual creases to be the son of the soil and should be treated as an alien. Here, in this land, there can be no objection to God being called by any name whatever. Ingrained in this soil is love and respect for all faiths and religious beliefs. He cannot be a son of this soil at all who is intolerant of other faiths.

A Lesson From Neighbours

In this connection, it would be beneficial for our Muslim friends here to take a lesson from their co-religionists in Iran, Turkey and Indonesia. Though Persia became Islamic, Persians did not change their script and take to the Arabic script. They did not take to the Arabic way of life; they stuck to their own. They have been sticking to the memory of their great forefathers. Even now a

Persian will remember his forefathers, will speak of Rustom with great respect and honour. Rustom was not a Muslim. Kamal Pasha 'the Maker of Modern Turkey' restored the age-old national pattern of life and limited the role of Islam to personal worship of God.

The example of Indonesia is extremely revealing. Majority of the Indonesians profess Islam. However, Saraswati and Ganesh are the presiding deities of their learning and knowledge. Children start their ABC in education with pictorial Ramayana. One of our countrymen was amazed to see this when he had gone there. He asked a leading Indonesian, "How is it, though you are Muslims, you teach Ramayana to your Children?" The Indonesian replied with pride, "Because. Sri Ramachandra is our national hero par excellence. We very much desire that our children should emulate his lofty ideal. No doubt we belong to the Islamic faith. But that does not mean that we should give up our precious national heritage and values of life." What an excellent lesson for our Muslim friends here! There the names too are hundred per cent Hindu. Their previous President was Sukarna. His son, Kartikeya. The present President is Suhrida (distorted as Suharto in English) meaning 'a true friend'. Women too bear the proud names of Sita, Savitri, Damayanti etc. Garuda, the mount of Vishnu, adorns the name of their airways. Their constitution begins with the declaration "Dharmo Rakshti Rakshitah."

This is the real and abiding cornerstone of national harmony and integration, subscribing to common national ideals irrespective of personal religious creeds. And it is this concept as applied to our country, that we call Hindu Rashtra, the only rational, practical and right concept.

The Semitic Contrast

In spite of this catholic and rational approach of Hindu Rashtra towards the so-called minorities, it is amazing that some people should harbour fear that the 'minorities' live in mortal peril if Hindu Rashtra comes into its own. The fear, if at all genuine, can only be due to their misconception that 'Hindu Rashtra' would treat other religious groups in much the same way as the Semitic religions did. The first Semitic religion was Judaism-an intolerant faith. It was this intolerance that nailed Christ on the Cross. Then came Christianity, the child of the former. That too was equally intolerant. Doubtless Christ was a great saint. But later, what went on in the name of Christ had nothing to do with him. It was no Christianity but only 'Churchianity'. The saying "There was but one true Christian and he died on the Cross" is true to the letter. The Christians committed all sorts of atrocities on the Jews by giving them the label 'Killers of Christ'. Hitler is not an exception but a culmination of the 2000-year long oppression of the Jews by the Christians. Then came Islam “ a long story of 'Sword and Koran' written in the tears and blood of millions of innocent human beings. Its latest chapter of 'Pakistan', the self-declared theocratic Islamic State, is no different with the entire Hindu population butchered and driven out from its western wing and the same process continuing in its eastern wing. All these have ingrained in their blood intolerance of other faiths.

The fear that Hindu Rashtra will imperil the existence of other religious groups arises by applying the above Semitic yardstick to it and imagining that the concept of Hindu Rashtra in analogous to that of the Semitic states notorious for their religious bigotry and persecutions.

Hindu Rashtra in Living Practice

To disabuse the minds of genuinely doubtful souls we may recapture here the historical tradition of Hindu Rashtra vis-Ã -vis the foreign religious groups. The glaring fact inscribed on every

page of our history and testified by even foreign historians and travellers, is that we never discriminated against any one on the score of religion in any sphere of our national life.

The Muslims enjoyed perfect freedom and equality in the powerful Hindu empire under the Vijaynagar Kings or in the Punjab under Sikh heroes. The latest Hindu Power, which rose under the great Shivaji, too, did not discriminate against Muslims on the score of religion.

To cite a few instances, the naval chief of Charapati Shivaji, Darya Sarang, was a Muslim, and two of his main lieutenants were Ibrahim Khan and Daulat Khan. At the time of the grim encounter with Afzal Khan, out of the ten trusted bodyguards who accompanied Shivaji, three were Muslims. Again, the 18-year old lad who accompanies Shivaji to Agra and who played a key role in the thrilling escape of Shivaji from the grip of Aurangzeb was Madari Mehtar, a Muslim. Countless instances are there of Shivaji gifting land and annual grant to masjids and dargas. He even made arrangements for the offering of worship according to Islam to the tomb of Afzal Khan on Pratapgad. Even the most fanatic Muslim chroniclers of those times have noted with admiration that Shivaji treated with utmost respect their Koran, masjids and dargas, their holy men and their womenfolk. And all this, when exactly the opposite was being perpetrated by the Muslim on Hindus all round.

Even later on, on the battlefield of Panipat in 1761, in the crucial struggle for the survival of Swaraj, the key position of the Artillery Chief on the side of the Hindus was held by Ibrahim Gardi, who ultimately fell fighting on the battleground.

Hindusthan lived life of unchallenged glory and power for thousands of years and spread its spiritual and cultural effulgence over vast areas of the globe-right from Mexico to Japan. Never

has its flag waded towards military victory through the blood and tears of those races as it happened with Islam and Christianity when they spread to new countries. Its victory had always been moral and cultural. It was a victory joyously welcomed by the local populace, a victory of selflessness, character and catholicity of spirit which, evoked gratitude instead of revolt from them. Passage of centuries has not dimmed their feelings towards this land. Even to this day the inmost wish of many a devout soul of those lands is to come to the 'holy land' of Hindusthan and take a dip in the Ganga. For them, it is never a simple 'visit' to this country, it is always a 'pilgrimage'. From all this, one can easily visualize the unique and matchless life-values that formed the very core of this nation.

Real Guarantee to Minorities

As such, the so-called minorities living here have nothing to lose but everything to gain by the rejuvenation of Hindu Rashtra. It is the Hindu thought alone which, in this wide world, has recognised the immanence of one Supreme Power in the entire humanity and has respected and even protected and encouraged all types of cults and creeds to grow and blossom to their fulfillment. All these factors point to the fact that it is only a strong and resurgent Hindu Rashtra that can stand guarantee to the free and prosperous life of the so-called minorities here sharing equal opportunities as the proud children of the motherland.

HINDU RASHTRA AND SECULARISM

"Secularism" is not " Nationalism" - Hindu view with positive content.

A dubious argument that is repeated ad nauseam is that the concept of Hindu Rashtra is against 'secularism'. First of all, the very notion of 'secularism' as it originated in the West has no

relevance to our country. Centuries ago, in Europe, the kings revolted and overthrew the theocratic hegemony of Pope over their kingdoms and established their own rule. Thus came about the 'secular' states as opposed to the 'theocratic' ones. Now 'theocratic state' has come to mean a religious state intolerant of all other faiths. There has never been any quarter for such a conflict or intolerance in our country either in the past or in the present.

Further, the word 'secular' is nowhere to be found in our Constitution* as pointed out be Sri K. Subba Rao, Ex-chief Justice of our country. As such, the foisting of that word on our Constitution could, in a way, be termed an interpolation and a superimposition upon the Constitution.

Steer Clear of Confusions

Then there is the confusion of equating 'secularism' with 'nationalism'. The two can never be the same. 'Nation' is a whole and living entity. It has ever so many functions, one of which is the statecraft. And 'secularism' is only one of the qualities of that statecraft. Thus equating 'secularism' with 'nationalism' would be like identifying one of the functions of a limb of a body with the body itself, and exhibits a sad lack of understanding of the basic distinction between 'Nation' and 'State'.

Again, if 'secularism' is to mean only the mundane things of life and something divorced from the higher and nobler attributes of the spirit, as it is sometimes made out to be, then we will not touch it even with a barge-pole. If, however, 'secularism' is to mean, as it ought to, not anti-religion but scope and opportunity for every religious persuasion to grow, and restraining of one religion from pouncing upon another, then that is undoubtedly in tune with the spirit of Hindu Rashtra. Then, the apt word for such a state would be 'multireligious' and not 'secular'. In this country,

the 'state' was never tagged on to any particular faith. Relegating men of non-Hindu faiths to second-class citizenship or levying of 'Jezia' on them was unknown. All were absolutely equal in the eyes of law. Never did the king prostitute the state apparatus to impose his personal religious dogmas.

Positive Content

The Hindu thought did not stop at the negative aspect of restraining one religion from infringing upon another. The wide and all-comprehensive view of life ingrained in the Hindu ruler made him to respect and even encourage every single religious thought, however few its adherents, to grow according to its own genius. The king became the symbol of support and protection to all faiths and creeds and never of negation of religion. This is the positive content of 'secularism' if at all it can be called so. Indeed, our concept of 'state' has always been 'secular' and emphasising the secular nature of the state by the adjective 'secular' is redundant in our country.

Even today, it is on the strength of this national tradition that a Muslim can and does adorn the highest position of Presidentship, become the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and hold important portfolios in the central Cabinet and Internal and External Services. The contrast with the neighbouring theocratic State of Pakistan is so glaring as to need no elaboration.

But unfortunately secularism in India has, in practice, meant anti-Hinduism for people at the helm of affairs. When the late Dr. Zakir Husain specially went to Kerala to inaugurate a mosque, nobody objected. But when Dr. Giri went to Tirupati after his election as Rashtrapati, it was dubbed communal. The world must be laughing at us.

15. Affirm Basic Truths

Our True National Life

The national life of Bharat is an ancient one. The social life here has been woven round a cultural tradition imbued with common life-ideals stemming out of a common comprehensive life-philosophy. This has been a living tradition since ages, well before the Islamic and Christian invaders stepped on this soil. The thread of inherent unity has never snapped in spite of apparent distinctions and dissensions among castes, creeds, sects and even political kingdoms. The human group, which has been expressing this unified current of life has been popularly known as the "Hindu". The national life in Bharat is therefore the Hindu National Life.

What is “Intergration”?

It is on positive and true understanding that the discussion regarding National Integration should be based. "Integration" is nothing less than strengthening the spirit of identification with this true national mainstream, its tradition and its aspirations.

“National”, “Communal”, “anti-national”

All such works which help nourishing and strengthening this national ethos are "national". All such groups who consider themselves distinct from this national ethos and cherish hopes and aspirations in opposition to the national ones and demand separate rights and privilege for themselves are to be called "communal".

If in their attempt to achieve their separate rights etc., they attack the national society - whether in the form of religious conversion

or destruction or desecration of places of worship or insulting the memory of the great sons of this soil or in whatever other manner, such groups should be termed "anti-national."

The Hindu in Bharat can never be termed "communal". He has ever been devoted to Bharat and ready to strive for its progress and uphold its honour. The national life-values of Bharat are indeed derived from the life of Hindus. As such he is the "national" here, and never "communal".

A Fallacious Expression

The expression "communalism of the majority" is totally wrong and misconceived. In a democracy the opinion of the majority has to hold the sway in the day-to-day life of the people. As such it will be but proper to consider the practical conduct of the life of majority as the actual life of the national entity. From this point of view also, efforts to uplift the life of Hindus is national and not communal. The * Note to National Integration council. term "majority communalism" is thus opposed to the spirit of democracy. Under foreign domination, since they were considering the entire people as their slaves divided into distinct castes and communities, it was natural that they should be using such terms as majority and minority communalism. But under independence, the rule being of majority, to speak of "majority communalism" is opposed to logic, truth and justice.

Duty to be Vigilant

The Hindu always has been showing due respect to all other beliefs. He does not look upon diversity in worship as something incompatible with national unity. He opposes at times the attitude of adopting separatist policy in material life under the pretext of laying maximum emphasis on religion and also the demands for special privileges which cause injury to national life. In fact it is

his natural paramount duty to exercise vigilance always and steadfastly oppose all such tendencies.

Appeasement Harmful

It is detrimental to national life to support such tendencies, to adopt the policy of appeasement of such groups by meeting their anti-national demands, to indulge in bargaining with them for temporary ends, and, with a view to appeasing them, cause harm to points of national pride and honour and national interests and beliefs.

It would be a great folly and travesty of truth to term such right tendencies that oppose these perverted anti-national attitudes, as Communalism of Hindus. It is a sign of pervert intellect. It is in fact the duty of every nationally conscious citizen to oppose such tendencies.

Communalism: Seven Types

Communalism appears in several forms. The non-Hindu groups arraying themselves against the Hindu people - in whose life-stream the Bharatiya nation finds its true expression - are in a way communal. There are communalists in Hindu Society itself, who originally came into existence in the form of creeds as a manifestation of the many-sided Hindu genius, but who later on forgot the source of their inspiration and creation and began to consider themselves as being different from Hindu samaj and dharma, and who on that premise demand separate and exclusive political and economic privileges, and to achieve those demands proclaim themselves to be different form Hindu Society and take to various agitations. Neo-Buddhists and Sikhs are of this type. The third form of communalism is of groups like Dravida Kazhagam and Davidra Munnetra Kazhagam who, on the

fallacious assumptions of racial distinctness, claim separation, and who to achieve their ends spread hatred, enmity and violence against the rest of society. The fourth type consists of those who rouse controversies in the name of "touchability" and "untouchability", "Brahmin" and "non-Brahmin" and fan hatred, enmity, selfishness, and demands for special privileges. There is the fifth type, the communalism of linguistic groups, who indulge in spreading aversion, rivalry and hatred against other linguistic neighbours. The term "linguistic minorities" is born out of this tendency. The sixth type of communalism is one of narrow provincial feelings and of adopting unhealthy attitudes towards people from other provinces. South and North, Punjabi and non-Punjabi, Marathi, versus Kannada, Gujarati versus Marathi, Bengal-Bihar-Orrisa difference are of this type. There is the seventh type of communalism which aggravates differences of caste, creed, language, etc., and fans mutual hatred to achieve electoral ends. This is the most dangerous type rampant all over the country, of which many political parties, including the party in power, are guilty. So long as this-the political-type of communalism exists, it is well-nigh impossible to eradicate any other form of communalism. If only this seventh type of communalism is eschewed, then shall we find it less difficult to deal with the other forms. (Only the more prominent types are pointed out here; there may be some more, the minor ones.)

Origin of Conflict

From the above, it is evident that whereas some types of communalism are bred on the basis of religious creeds, others flourish solely on the basis of selfish secular interests. It is therefore fallacious to say that communalism is the antithesis of secularism. In fact, there will not be usually any conflict in the religious field merely on the basis of diversity in faiths. Conflicts are generated due to mutual rivalry in cornering greater secular gains.

Dhrama is Broader

Logic and history do not bear out either that ideas of dharma are narrow or that economic interests are more comprehensive. Under the religious domain of Christianity, there are several nation-states in America and Europe founded on narrow economic interests. Under the religious expanse of Islam, there are several states based on narrow economic and racial interests. Under one vast Sanatana dharma (which includes under its wings all Vedic, non-Vedic, and other faiths born in this land) there are states like Bharat, Nepal, etc., formed on the basis economic considerations. It is therefore evident that the pursuit of religion gives a broad base whereas economic interests narrow down the relations.

Eschew Over-Attachment

Dharma is the eternal law of life, which gives an arrangement for all times and is all-embracing. It is clear from the illustrations given above that within the fold of Dharma particular forms of worship based on vested economic interests may also exist. Over-attachment to small creeds, beliefs and sub-beliefs create parochial feelings and become an instrument for spreading animosity and conflict in the path of achieving equality and harmony of economic and other secular interests. And hence, such over attachment is undesirable.

If any one wants to forge unity on the basis of economic interests, ignoring dharma, society, nation, etc., then such unity cannot be achieved in a particular limited piece of land; it can only be done on a global level comprehending all the cross-sections of the entire mankind of diverse economic interests. Then 'National Integration' will have lost all its meaning and purpose.

What is Aimed at

While bringing about integration with the nation in its practical life, destruction of distinct ways of worship is not aimed at, only putting an end to undesirable tendencies of exclusiveness and intolerance is aimed at; destruction of languages is not aimed at, but the separatism and the desire to secede born out of language fanaticism is only aimed at.

THE WAYS AND MEANS

Rouse Intense Devotion

Regardless of caste and creed, every individual should be taught that it is the supreme duty of all the people of Bharat to proclaim unhesitatingly the truth of the Hindu Nationhood of Bharat and to make it strong, prosperous, virile and sovereign. Intense devotion to this Nation should be roused in one and all.

While respecting and protecting the religions of non-Hindus, arrangements should be made to impart smaskars to them of love and respect for the tradition, history, life-attitudes, ideals and values of this nation, and to identify their aspirations with those of the nation.

No Divisive Talks

In secular life all citizens are equal; this principle should be strictly adhered to. We must cry a complete halt to forming groups based on caste, creed, etc., and demanding exclusive rights and privileges in services, financial aids, admission in educational institutions and all such other fields. To talk and think in terms of "minorities" and "communities" should be totally put an end to.

Set Right Wrong Language Policy

A free nation will have its own language for mutual intercourse. Out of several national languages, Hindi has been accepted as the link language from the point of view of its ease and convenience. In the name of making it easy, to make it unintelligible by Urduising it, is to import communalism and communal appeasement into the sovereign independence of the nation. This attitude towards State Language of the nation or to treat it at par with English, which binds our country to the bandwagon of a foreign language, is to strike at the roots of our sublime national ethos. Intense devotion to the nation being the mainstay of Integration, these wrong language policies should at once be discarded.

For a Unitary State

We are one country, one society, and one nation, with a community of life-values and secular aspirations and interests; and hence it is natural that the affairs of the nation are governed through a single state of the unitary type. The present federal system generates and feeds separatist feelings. In a way, it negates the truth of a single nationhood and is, therefore, divisive in nature. It must be remedied and the Constitution amended and cleaned so as to establish Unitary Form of Government.

Stop Aggressive Practices

The present policy of the government towards the attacks and transgressions, such as destruction of places of worship and breaking of idols, cow-slaughter, illegal construction of peer graves, dragah, makbara, cross, in private or public places, stopping religious processions etc. under unjust pretexts, rioting, threatening, etc., is detrimental to Integration in the extreme. Instead of preventing these acts, the policy of supporting and promoting them in a clandestine fashion is only creating more discord. It should therefore be eschewed forthwith and policy of

putting an end to such evil practices must be pursued with will and vigour.

Hindu: No Divided Loyalty

Only in the soil of Bharat have the Hindus pinned their sentiments of dharma. The appeal of the holy places takes him round the entire Bharat, and Bharat only. His material interests also are embedded in Bharat only. As such, this devotion is wholly and solely to Bharat. Hence there can never be any conflict in his mind between Swadharma and Swadesh; there has always been identification between the two. There are no divided loyalties in him. It is impossible to find in him any loyalty to dharma in contradistinction or in opposition to loyalty to country. It is a proof positive that Hindus are a hundred per cent national society here. To call them "communal" and to place them at par with those people whose loyalties are divided and at times questionable is unjust and unwise.

Conversion Subverts Loyalty

Conversion of Hindus into other religions is nothing but making them succumb to divided loyalty in place of having undivided and absolute loyalty to the nation. It is dangerous to the security of the nation and the country. It is therefore necessary to put a stop to it. Conversion of an individual does not take place after a serious and comparative study of philosophies by him. It is by exploitation of poverty, illiteracy and ignorance, offering of inducements and by deceptive tactics that people are converted. There is no question of a true change of heart involved in this. It is but right that this unjust activity is prohibited. It is a duty we have to discharge towards protecting our brethren in ignorance and poverty.

The Right Direction and Present Perversion

Hindu philosophy, being all-comprehensive, has potency to assimilate non-Hindu communities. Pt. Nehru had this in his mind when he said that it is necessary to assimilate Muslims and Christians into Hindu society in the same manner as invaders like Shakas and Hunas were assimilated in the past. In that speech, Pt. Nehru has given the right direction for achieving national unity and for unifying the various creeds of worship and instilling in them a common point of devotion. However, the present attempts are such as to discredit the Hindus and, through the appeasement policy, to make the non-Hindus more aggressive in their already existing aggressive designs. In this way, the heritage and the tradition of Hindus are being insulted, making them imbecile and incapable of defending themselves. This perverted policy is equivalent to not only discarding the correct direction given by Pt. Nehru but even negating it. It is essential that this perversion is set right, and a policy of upholding the honoured place of Hindus, who have been sticking to the path of unflinching national loyalty all along, and integrating others with them in tune with those norms, be followed.

Dissolve the Committee

The committee formed in the name of National Integration has, by giving a scope for several disgruntled groups to air their demands and complaints, roused in them a hope that their divisive demands would be conceded because of the committees assurances of finding a way out of communalism and its talk of defining "communalism" with a view to eliminating it. By this the desire to maintain their entities separate may become only more acute in several groups, that is all.

Repeated calls for "National Integration" only lead to, and strengthen the undesirable impression that presently it is

lamentably lacking. Therefore the very existence of the committee now appears to be against its very basic purpose. As such it is necessary to dissolve it forthwith. It will be a great step in furtherance of "National Integration".

IN CONCLUSION:

The Mission

Realising the national character of Hindu People, the RSS has been making determined efforts to inculcate in them burning devotion for Bharat and its national ethos; kindle in them the spirit of dedication and sterling qualities and character; rouse social consciousness, mutual good-will, love and cooperation among them all; to make them realise that casts, creeds and languages are secondary and that service to the nation is the supreme end and to mould their behaviour accordingly; instil in them a sense of true humility and discipline and train their bodies to be strong and robust so as to shoulder any social responsibility; and thus to create all-round Anushasana in all walks of life and build together all our people into a unified harmonious national whole, extending from Himalayas to Kanyakumari.

The Convictions

The Sangh has no demands to make. It does not fight for special rights or privileges. It does not compete in electioneering politics, nor has it any desire to share power. As such, it does not also have any such policy. It cherishes no ambitions other than to make our nation organised, prosperous and glorious, and to dedicate our all at its altar. It has no place, therefore, for any hatred or opposition towards any particular caste, creed or party. Being positively Hindu in its outlook, it has equal respect, love and tolerance towards all. The function of state according to Hindu concept is

limited to secular matters only. It is against the Hindu faith and tradition to think in terms of exclusive and special rights on the basis of any creed or sect.

The Retarding Hand

It is clear that this aim of Sangh is the same as re-establishing the integrated feeling of oneness of the nation which has been flowing down since times immemorial. Some suspicions have been roused with regard to this, because, the Government and certain important members of the ruling party, and some other political parties have maliciously described it as subversive. Otherwise, it would have by now succeeded to a large extent in dispelling provincialism, linguistic animosities, casteism, etc,. rampant all around today and there would have been no need to constitute any committee for that purpose.

A Sacred Vow

The RSS has been working all these years, placing the unshakable faith in its mission of building a strong, reorganised and unified national life and has taken to this path as a sacred vow of duty. By the Grace of Almighty, it shall continue to do so and shall succeed in it at no distant date.

SOME BASIC CONCEPTS

Broadly speaking:

1. People whose loyalty to the country and her traditions, to her heroes down the centuries, to her security and prosperity, is undivided and unadulterated, are national.

2. People who though entertaining such loyalty think in terms of their sect, caste, language or so called race in contradistinction to the rest of the people, and strive for their own limited benefit and enjoyment of political power, for enjoying special rights and privileges not claimed or enjoyed by the general people, and for these purposes envy, hate, oppose and sometimes take recourse even to violent means, are communal.

3. (i) Groups whose loyalty is divided and who have loyalties superior to that mentioned in (1) and who in case of conflict of loyalties would disregard, or be indifferent to, the interests of the country, and choose to serve other objects of their faith, are hostiles.

(ii) Groups who continue to believe themselves to be aliens, aggressors, victors and erstwhile masters and rulers of the country, are aliens evidently, and when there is a desire to re-establish themselves as such rulers, are also hostile.

4. Those, who though nationals, would, out of some perverted notions, strive to break away from the people as a whole and form themselves into a separate and conflicting state, are anti-national.

5. (i) Such of those mentioned in (4) who would not hesitate to join hands with those mentioned in (3) (i) and (ii) to achieve their ends, or would like to, or actually try to, league with any foreign power for these ends, are traitors.

(ii) Political parties, which to gain or retain power, would associate with or give preferential treatment to such as are mentioned in (3) (i) and (ii) & (4) may be classed with (5) (i).

(iii) Political parties professing an ideology forming the basis of foreign powers, who would prefer such powers to the country, would tolerate, explain away, justify, or overtly or covertly assist

such powers even against the country and in case of their aggression on our country are both traitors and enemies.

Unfortunately all such classes are existing in our holy land, a proper and fearless understanding of which is essential to the building up of a strong integrated national life.

In all such groups exceptions are bound to exist. Traitorous individuals amongst the nationals, and patriotic individuals amongst the other groups, may be found. Let us learn to discriminate between individual qualities and psychology of the mass. It is common experience that patriotic individuals in the other groups are swept off their feet when mass frenzy bursts forth. It is this psychology of the mass group as a whole that has to be considered and dealt with on a social, cultural, historical and political basis, keeping the interests of the country before the eyes as the supreme object of achievement. The general law is sufficient to deal with individual cases of perversity or hostility.

The interests of (1) are supreme and must be held aloft. (2) and (4) have to be dealt with prudence and strength, sympathy and loving understanding so as to wean them away from their fissiparous activities, likely to be detrimental or dangerous to the country and nation. The others have to be put down with a strong hand by all possible means.

Some Apprehensions

After the Usha Bhargava episode at Jabalpur, many leaders including Pt. Nehru, have started freely using the term "majority communalism" and accusing the Hindu people of "communalism" and threatening to crush it. It is in this background that the present National Integration Council has been formed. So, it gives rise to the suspicion whether under the innocuous veil of National Integration a mischievous move is afoot to dub such organisations

as are working for the protection and welfare of Hindus as "communal", to break the spirit of self-respect and self-confidence in the Hindu Society thus making it imbecile, and to woo and appease the anti-Hindu communities thus encouraging them in their aggressive designs.

Grounds

Failure to carry out an impartial enquiry into Aligarh incidents, and giving a clean chit to the Aligarh University authorities.

Under the guise of simplifying Hindi in Akashvani, Urduising it thereby corrupting and making it unintelligible, although it is being used in accordance with the spirit of our Constitution.

Assurance given by the Education Minister of U.P. for the removal from the textbooks of references to our national heroes and the banning of celebration of Hindu festivals in schools.

Pursing a policy of not expelling the illegal Muslim infiltrators from East Bengal although such a step is perfectly legal. To advise the West Bengal Government not to protest against the atrocities being perpetrated against the Hindus in East Bengal, and to advance the strange argument that such a step would create a sense of insecurity in the minds of "minorities", i.e., the Muslims, here. These and similar other instances could be quoted to confirm our worst doubts and provide evidence for the policy of Muslim appeasement.

A news appeared in papers some time ago that the subcommittee which is now formed would invite the spokesmen of the various "communal" organisations and seek their views. However, the sub-committee itself is formed to lay down the definition of "communalism". Hence, to declare some bodies as "communal"

even before defining what "communalism" is, gives room for doubt about its honesty of purpose.

Some honourable members of the sub-committee have, on several occasions, named many Hindu personalities and institutions as "communal". This attitude to indulging in allegations even before the meaning of that term is decided casts doubts about the integrity of such persons.

Can any honest enquiry be expected of a committee consisting of such persons and born with such background?

Chief Minister of Maharashtra was asked (by the sub-committee) whether he had any intention of carving out a separate state, completely out of the domain of union of India. Asking such question is disgraceful and insulting. It is a proof of the prejudiced minds of the committee members. Can a truthful enquiry be expected form such prejudiced minds?

It is said the Council is interested only with the views of political parties. Where, then, is the propriety of inviting the RSS, which has nothing to do with politics?

What are the powers of the Council? If it is only a forum for exchange of views and advices without any purpose or use, then would it not be a mere waste of time to indulge in such an exercise?

The Government and the ruling party appear to have a dominating voice in the Council. Under these conditions, would it not be futile to expect an impartial consideration of the issues?

16. Internal Threats

THE MUSLIMS

It has been the tragic lesson of the history of many a country in the world that the hostile elements within the country pose a far greater menace to national security than aggressors from outside. Unfortunately, this first lesson of national security has been the one thing, which has been consistently ignored in our country ever since the British left this land. Wishful thinking born out of lack of courage to face realities, mouthing of high-sounding slogans by the persons at the helm of affairs to cover up the tragedies overtaking us one after another, and opportunistic alliances of parties and groups with the hostile elements to further their narrow self-interests, have all combined to make the threat of internal subversion of our national freedom and security very acute and real.

First, let us take the case of Muslims.

Even to this day, there are so many who say, "Now there is no Muslim problem at all. All those riotous elements who supported Pakistan have gone away once and for all. The remaining Muslims are devoted to our country. After all, they have no other place to go and they are bound to remain loyal."

Let Facts Speak

But what are the facts? Is it true that all pro-Pakistani elements have gone away to Pakistan? It was the Muslims in Hindu majority provinces led by U.P. who provided the spearhead for the movement for Pakistan right from the beginning. And they have remained solidly here even after Partition. In fact, the Muslims of Punjab, Bengal, Sindh and NWFP which went over to

Pakistan had totally rejected Muslim League in the 1937 elections. It was only in later years that, because of the wrong policies of our leadership, the Muslims there were pushed into the arms of the Muslim League.

And again, before Partition there were elections for the setting up of the Constituent Assembly. In those elections Muslim League had contested making the creation of Pakistan its election plank. The Congress also had set up some Muslim candidates all over the country. But at almost every such place, Muslims voted for the Muslim League candidates and the Muslim candidates of Congress were utterly routed. NWFP was an exception. It only means that all the crores of Muslims who are here even now, had en bloc voted for Pakistan.

Have those who remained here changed at least after that? Has their old hostility and murderous mood, which resulted in widespread riots, looting, arson, raping and all sorts of orgies on an unprecedented scale in 1946-47, come to a halt at least now? It would be suicidal to delude ourselves into believing that they have turned patriots overnight after the creation of Pakistan. On the contrary, the Muslim menace has increased a hundred fold by the creation of Pakistan which has become a springboard for all their future aggressive designs on our country.

Pakistan - A Continuing Aggression

Their aggressive strategy has always been twofold. One is direct aggression. In the pre-independence days, Jinnah called it 'Direct Action'. The first blow got them Pakistan. Our leaders who were a party to the creation of Pakistan may try to whitewash the tragedy by saying that it was a brotherly division of the country and so on. But the naked fact remains that an aggressive Muslim State has been carved out of our own motherland. From the day the so-

called Pakistan came into being, we in Sangh have been declaring that it is a clear case of continued Muslim aggression. The Muslim desire, growing ever since they stepped on this land some twelve hundred years ago, to convert and enslave the entire country could not bear fruit, in spite of their political domination for several centuries, because the conquering spirit of the nation rose in the form of great and valiant men from time to time who sounded the death-knell of their kingdoms here. But even though their kingdoms lay shattered, their desire for domination did not break up. In the coming of the British they found an opportunity to fulfil their desire. They played their cards shrewdly, sometimes creating terror and havoc, and ultimately succeeded in brow-beating our leadership into panicky surrender to their sinful demand of Partition.

We of the Sangh have been, in fact, hammering this historical truth for the last so many years. Some time ago, the noted world historian Prof. Arnold Toynbee came forward to confirm it. He visited our country twice, studied our national development at close quarters, and wrote an article setting forth the correct historical perspective of Partition. Therein he had unequivocally stated that the creation of Pakistan is the first successful step of the Muslims in this 20th century to realise their twelve-hundred-year-old dream of complete subjugation of this country.

Their direct aggression, whetted by their first success, then truned against Kashmir. There too they met with success, though partial. One third of Kashmir continues to be in their clutches even to this day. Now, Pakistan is trying to gobble up the rest of Kashmir also with the help of powerful pro-Pakistani elements inside Kashmir.

Pursuing Jinnah's Dream

The second front of their aggression is increasing their numbers in strategic areas of our country. After Kashmir, Assam is their next

target. They have been systematically flooding Assam, Tripura and the rest of Bengal since long. It is not because, as some would like us to believe, East Pakistan is in the grip of a famine that people are coming away into Assam and West Bengal. The Pakistani Muslims have been inflitrating into Assam for the past fifteen years. Does it mean then that famine has been stalking East Pakistan all these fifteen years? They are entering Assam surreptitiously and the local Muslims are sheltering them. As a result the percentage of Muslims there which was only 11% in 1950, has now more than doubled. What else is this but a conspiracy to make Assam a Muslim majority province so that it would automatically fall into the lap of Pakistan in course of time?

In the anti-Bengali riots (1960) that rocked Assam, the Muslim population and the Muslim ministers, as usual, played their treacherous game. They set up Assami Hindu against Bengali Hindu and vice versa as it suited their designs and carried sword and fire into Hindu hearts and homes in their bid to oust the Bengali Hindus. By this, they increased their percentage in relation to the Hindus in that province. Certain things which have happened there are tell-tale. Many were the cases where the house of a Bengali Muslim gentleman was safe but the houses of Bengali Hindus on either side were burnt down. Papers also have reported that some persons were arrested while trying to carry away looted property to East Pakistan. It is a patent fact that Muslims form Pakistan had poured into Assam in truckloads to carry out their designs. When we remember that Kashmir and Assam were to have formed part of the Pakistan of Jinnah's dream, their plan of action becomes clear as daylight.

It would be suicidal on our part to dismiss their plan of realising the dream of Jinnah as mere thinking. And so did we, at one time, dismiss Jinnah's demand for Pakistan as 'fantastic'. But all the same, it is now a stark reality. Their hectic activities of collecting

arms and ammunition are going on unabated. Their meetings in masjids and incitement to violence are dangerously on the increase. A few years ago the Police Commissioner of Calcutta had warned that the Nakhoda masjid alone had stored sufficient arms and ammunition to blow up half of Calcutta and unless the masjid was searched and cleared of the dangerous stuff, maintaining public peace in Calcutta was well-nigh impossible. For this courageous warning he was at once transferred from Calcutta! The bomb explosions going on in Delhi and several other places in the country are a glaring proof of their subversive preparations-if proof be needed even after the history of a thousand years of their naked aggression.

They are especially emboldened in their nefarious designs by the fact that the present-day leadership is too weak to put a strong check on them. They remember very well that their acts of violence and bloodshed in Calcutta, Noakhali and Tripura had unnerved our leaders and made them succumb to bartering away the unity of our motherland and handing over a part of the country to them. Even to this day they see that goondaism pays rich dividends at the hands of our present leadership.

An incident happened in the wake of the massacres and mass expulsion of Hindus from east Bengal in 1950. It was precisely at that period that a series of riots broke out in many parts of Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi. Our Government suffers from a strange obsession that wherever there is a 'communal riot' there must be the hand of RSS in it! Accordingly, the U.P. Government clamped some of our workers behind bars. Then I happened to meet Sardar Patel for some other reason. I naturally inquired why our persons were arrested. He replied that the U.P. Government had received reports that the Sangh workers were responsible for all those disturbances. Then I told him, "If you had observed the position of the areas where the disturbances have taken place, it would have been clear to you that they are the same as those that

Jinnah had demanded as a corridor to join West and East Pakistan. Further, these riots have coincided with the mass expulsion of Hindus form East Bengal. The only meaning is that they want to browbeat our Government into yielding to their demand of the corridor." Sardar Patel remained silent for a minute and then said, "Yes. There is truth in what you say." Needless to say, all our workers were released soon after. We are fortunate that we had in Sardar Patel a person with an iron will to face the reality in those days.

The Time-Bomb

Sardar Patel was aware that Western U.P. had continued to be powerful Muslim pocket as before. He did not want that it should be linked to West Pakistan by a continuous Muslim belt. Hence he had taken due precautions to see that the Muslims driven out of East Punjab after Partition did not resettle anywhere near West Punjab so as to from a continuous Muslim chain from West Pakistan to U.P. But, on account of pressure form Acharya Vinoba Bhave, Muslims were allowed to resettle first in Gurgaon district. Now, over four lakh Muslims have resettled in those regions.

There are sure signs that an explosive situation similar to that if 1946-47 is fast brewing and there is no knowing when it will blow up. Right form Delhi to Rampur and Lucknow, the Muslims are busy hatching a dangerous plot, piling up arms and mobilising their men and probably biding their time to strike from within when Pakistan decides upon an armed conflict with our country. And when they do strike, it is very likely that even Delhi may be rocked to its foundations unless we wake up in time to nip the mischief in the bud. Not that our leaders do not know it. The secret intelligence reports reach them all right. But it seems they have in view only elections. Elections mean vote catching, which

means appeasing certain sections of people having a solid block of votes. And the Muslims are one such solid block. Therein lies the root of all this appeasement and consequent disastrous effects.

Forgetting Nothing, Learning Nothing

Muslim League has again raised its ugly head in the South. The creation of Pakistan woke up the Hindus in the North, at least for the time being, to the danger of Muslim League. So the League leaders shifted their headquarters to the South. Now they have come out with the statement that they have been carrying on their activities all these years in secret. The mass agitation in Kerala, which brought down the Communist Government, gave them a golden opportunity to come out in the open. The elections that followed proved to be a windfall for them. The Congress, learning nothing from its past experience of placating the Muslim League, which had landed our country in the calamity of Partition, once again stretched its arms to embrace that treacherous party during elections in 1957. And in order to justify their blatantly anti-national move, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru gave the Muslim League a clean chit of patriotism saying that it was not the old Muslim League but a new patriotic party devoted to their community and religion! What a marvellous definition of patriotism! But to his misfortune, on the very next day, the All-India President of the Muslim League came out which the statement that theirs was the same old party with not a shadow of change! Now in Kerala, they openly propagate an independent 'Moplanad'.

In these developments, one almost sees over half-a-century-old happenings coming to life once again. During the twenties, in a bid to win the friendship of Muslims, our leaders had called upon the Hindus to take up the Khilafat movement (a movement against the British who had dethroned the king in Turkey) as their own. In Kerala too, Hindus came froward with men and money to help the movement. But the Muslim wrath against the British

soon developed into a jehad against the Hindu 'kafirs' carrying with it all the usual atrocities of Muslim barbarism like killing, burning, molesting, looting and forcible conversions. When the news of these hair-raising atrocities reached and shocked other parts of the country, an eminent leader came out in open appreciation of those heinous Muslim criminals, calling them 'brave Mopals'! Let us just compare those words with the words of the present leaders speaking of them as 'patriotic' and we will get an idea of the long suicidal stupor, which has deadened all our faculties of national alertness and security.

Everywhere the Muslims are being abetted in their separatist and subversive activities by our own Government, our leaders and political parties. Take the case of Calcutta riots which occurred in the wake of the holocaust of Hindus in Khulna, Narayanganj and Dacca areas of East Pakistan in 1963. Our men in power tried to paint it as a reaction to those East Bengal riots. But what are the facts? It was the Muslims in Calcutta who first started the attack on a peaceful procession of students. It was again they who set fire to the grand exhibition pandal erected in connection with the Swami Vivekananda centenary celebrations and destroyed the precious exhibits. Can anyone in his senses believe that the Hindus of Calcutta could have destroyed a pandal containing Swami Vivekananda's exhibits? It was only after the Muslims began perpetrating such vandalism that the Hindus rose to defend themselves. Thus the Calcutta riots were, beyond a shadow of doubts, only an extension of-and not a reaction to- the riots in East Bengal.

But our Government, as usual, following in the footsteps of their erstwhile British masters, came down upon the Hindus with a heavy hand and shot them indiscriminately. One of our Central Ministers even declared, "Every Muslim life is sacred to us", whereas every life ought to be a sacred trust with any Government worth the name. He even boasted that more Hindus were killed in

police firing than Muslims. By the statement he had only betrayed the real mind of the Government in the matter. That, in fine, is how things are going on in our own country.

Countless 'Miniature Pakistans'

Some years back, an Arab Muslim moulvi who was on a visit to our country was requested to recite Quran as they do in their country. To that he replied, "There we sing to the accompaniment of harmonium, tabor and such other musical instruments. Here if I do that, the local idiotic Muslims will cut me to pieces!" Is it not obvious that the so-called religious susceptibility of the Muslims here regarding music has nothing to do with religion or prayer but is solely motivated with a view to picking up quarrel with the Hindus and establishing their own little independent cells?

How is it that they dare to carry on these offensive and anti-national practices openly? It is because our Government too overtly and covertly supports them. Though the High courts have upheld the fundamental right of the citizens to go in procession with band in all public roads, the Government, under the cover of discretionary powers vested in the executive for regulating processions in the interest of peace and order, often prevents the Hindus altogether from taking out processions in streets where masjids happen to he situated. That could set the premium on those who want to violate peace. And peaceful citizens, in the enjoyment of their inherent rights as citizens, are the prey of such violations. The law-abiding citizens are told to restrict themselves, and those who are out to indulge in violence are given a free hand to do what they like. This is in a way admitting, though indirectly, that within the country there are so many Muslim pockets, i.e., so many 'miniature Pakistans', where the general law of the land is to be enforced only with certain modifications and the whims of the miscreants have to be given the final say. This acceptance, indirect though it may be, implies a

very dangerous theory fraught with possibilities of destruction of our national life altogether. Such 'pockets' have verily become centres of a widespread network of pro-Pakistani elements in this land.

Instances Galore

To cite an example, there was riot in Malegoan (1963) in Maharashtra. The idol of Ganesha was being taken in a procession for immersion. The Muslims attacked it. There was a skirmish. The Government, as usual, came forward to establish law and order, and took into custody scores of leading Hindu gentlemen as though they were responsible for the outbreak of lawlessness? Later, I had an occasion to meet one important high-up in that State. I said to him, "This incident took place at about 9 or 10 o'clock in the night. The very next morning the Pakistan radio broadcast that there had been 'a great genocide of Muslims' in that particular town! How did Pakistan come to know about the affair within these few hours? There must be some pro-Pakistani gentleman with a transmitter and he must be in constant touch with Pakistan." He said, "Yes, that is the only possibility." Then I asked him, "Do you know that the reports of even the in-camera conferences that go on in Prime Minister's house which are supposed to be very confidential often go to Peking and Rawalpindi the very same night?" He said, "Yes, I am aware of it."

The conclusion is that, in practically every place, there are Muslims who are in constant touch with Pakistan over the transmitter enjoying not only the right of an average citizen but also some extra privileges and extra favour because they are 'minorities'! Our C.I.D. department seems to be more concerned about patriotic persons than about such elements as are trying to undermine our very national existence!

Some time back an M.L.A. threw a challenge in the U.P. Assembly that several transmitters were active in Lucknow City alone and that he would guide the police-if they dared-to trace them. So far the Government does-not seem to have heard him at all! No wonder the enemy agents carry on their nefarious schemes merrily as if the Government itself is on their side!

The Great 'Nationalist Muslims'

Let us now at least wake up, look around and understand the true significance of the words and actions of even the very eminent Muslims. Their own statements have exposed the greatest of the so-called 'nationalist Muslim' in their true colours today.

Maulana Mohammed Ali, the right hand man of Mahatma Gandhi in the early days of freedom struggle, had announced in public, not once but repeatedly, that the worst sinner and debauchee among the Muslims was, in his eyes, far superior to even Mahatma Gandhi!

I had once an opportunity to talk to a great scholar of the Sufi sect in our country. He said that the only way to meet the challenge of the godless philosophy of Communism was to mobilise and bring together all men having faith in God to whatever sect or religion they might belong. I asked him, "What is that common plank on which all can come together?" Without a moment's hesitation he replied, "Islam"! That is how the minds of even their so-called scholars and philosophers work!

The greatest 'nationalist Muslim' of our times, Maulana Azad too in his last days gave out his mind in the book India Wins Freedom in unmistakable terms. Firstly the whole of the book, from start to finish, is an unabashed egocentric narration which depicts all other leaders including Gandhiji, Nehru, etc., as simpletons and Patel as a communalist. Secondly, he has not a single word of

censure for heinous massacres and atrocities committed by Muslims on Hindus in various places like Calcutta, Noakhali, etc. More than all, the entire burden of his opposition to the creation of Pakistan was that it would be against the interests of Muslims! In fact, Azad says, the Muslims were fools in following Jinnah, as thereby they got only a fraction of the land whereas if they had followed his advice they would have had a decisive voice in the affairs of the entire country, in addition to all the benefits of Pakistan! Sri Mehrchand Mahajan, ex-Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, had come out with the same comments about the book. For instance, he says, "The Maulana was more shrewed than Mr. Jinnah. Left to him, India would have become virtually a Muslim-dominated country."

Face Reality

Their speeches carry the ring of open defiance and rebellion. A Muslim Minister at the Center, speaking from the platform of one such conference, warned that unless the Muslim interest was well protected the story of Spain would be repeated here also, meaning thereby that they would rise in armed revolt.

They have now been emboldened to such an extent that they are not only contesting elections in the name of the Muslim League in several provinces but are invariably raising the slogan 'Pakistan Zindabad' in their public meetings and processions. For them, only those areas in which their unbridled sway is established are 'Pak', i.e., holy and the rest of Bharat where they are living and flourishing is 'na-Pak', i.e., unholy. Can any son, however debased and depraved he may be, ever call his mother unholy and sinful? And still, we are asked to believe that such elements are the sons of this soil! It is strange that the creators of Pakistan should have chosen to name that state in that fashion. Calling that territory alone as pak, i.e., holy, amounts to lessening the holiness of even Mecca and Medina. Because even they would be na-pak when

compared to Pakistan! Let us cry a halt, before it is too late, to this long and suicidal spell of wishful thinking and come to grips with the cruel realities of the situation keeping the interests of national security and integrity as the one supreme consideration.

16. Internal Threats

THE CHRISTIANS

So far as the Christians are concerned, to a superficial observer they appear not only quite harmless but as the very embodiment of compassion and love for humanity! Their speeches abound in words like 'service' and 'human salvation' as though they are specially deputed by the Almighty to uplift humanity! They run schools and colleges, hospitals and orphanages. The people of our country, simple and innocent as they are, are taken in by all these things. But what is the real and ulterior motive of Christians in pouring crores of rupees in all these activities?

The Claw Bared

Our late President Dr. Rajendra Prasad, had once gone to Assam. He visited the schools and hospitals established by the Christian missionaries in those hilly regions and expressed his appreciation. But he also advised them at the end, "You have no doubt done very good work. But do no exploit all these things for the purpose of proselytisation." But the missionary who spoke next bluntly said, "If we had been prompted to do all this by mere humanitarian considerations, why should we have come all the way here? Why should we have spent so much money? We are here for only one reason and that is to increase number of followers of our Lord Jesus Christ." They are very clear about it.

Towards that end they feel that any tactics, however foul, is fair. The various surreptitious and mean tactics they employ for conversion are all too well known. There is the case of a village where, in the last census, the Christina missionaries got the whole population entered as Christians. When the mischief was known and the people there protested, the Christians missionaries told

them," Nothing can be done now. You have been registered as Christians in Government records. So you have to behave hereafter only as Christians." The poor Hindu villagers, cut off from the support and succor of the indifferent Hindu Society, believed in their words and embraced Christianity. It is through such tactics that they are swelling their numbers day in and day out.

Many leading Christian missionaries have often declared unequivocally that their one single aim is to make this country ' a province of the Kingdom of Christ'. The Archbishop of Madurai has said, as reported in Vedanta Kesari of Madras, that their sole aim is to fly the flag of Christ over the whole of Bharat. Even during the recent "Eucharistic Congress" at Bombay, Cardinal Gracias bewailed that after centuries of proselytising in Bharat the Catholics were only six million and the overwhelming majority remained Hindus. He exhorted his followers that every one of them should hereafter feel himself a missionary in the cause of proselytisation. What does all this mean? It means that all the people in this country should be converted to Christianity. That is, their hereditary religion, philosophy, culture and way of life should be demolished and they should become absorbed in a world federation of Christianity.

Religion or Politics?

The way they are behaving towards other people forces us to conclude that the modern proselytising religions have very little of true religion in them. In the name of God, Prophet and religion, they are only trying to further their political ambitions. In true religion there need be no porselytisation, no change in the way of worship. Our religious missionaries who reached distant lands in ancient times did not force their religion on other people. On the contrary, without negating their mode of worship, our great teachers tried to make it more sublime by fortifying it with an all-

comprehensive philosophy, to inculcate in them noble and chaste qualities of head and heart and make them better devotees in their own form of worship. That was real dhrama.

The concept of religion as propagated by the Christian missionaries is really amazing. Once I met a missionary. He gave me a book written by an Archbishop in England and told me that the book would make the nature of their work clear to me. I read it. When I returned it to him, he asked me with quite an interest, "How is the book?" I replied, "If such is your Archbishop, what about you?" that startled him. I pointed out to him some passages in that book which said that to attain God it is enough if one prays twice a day and attends the church on Sundays and that during the rest of the time there is no harm in indulging in any kind of physical pleasures and enjoyments. These words are, in fact, totally opposed to the sublime teachings of that seer, Jesus Christ.

Even St. Paul, the great disciple of Christ, has said, as quoted by Lokamanya Tilak in his Gita Rahasya, "How can it be a sin if by uttering falsehood I add to Your (God's) Glory?" No wonder, the present Christian missionaries have made full use of that statement to further their nefarious designs. Truly has it been said, "There was but one true Christian, and he died on the Cross!"

The Impartial Verdict

Their activities are not merely irreligious, they are also anti-national. Once I asked a Christian missionary why they abused our sacred scriptures, gods and goddess. He said frankly, "Our aim is to knock out the faith from the heart of the Hindus. When his faith is shattered, his nationalism is also destroyed. A void will be created in his mind. Then it becomes easy for us to fill that void with Christianity."

Some years ago, the Madhya Pradesh Government appointed a committee to report on the activities of these Christian missionaries. The Chairman of the committee, Sri Niyogi, was a highly respectable retired High Court Judge, not belonging to any group or party. The Committee members toured the whole of Madhya Pradesh and met the converted Christians, missionaries and other people. They also visited many churches. On the basis of all these personal investigations, the Committee prepared a lengthy report. The substance of that report is: "All the philanthropic acts of the missionaries are simply a mask for carrying on proselytising activities, sometimes by intimidating and sometimes by tempting the simple folk. At the root of the activities is their ambition to carve out a separate Christian State for themselves on the strength of their numbers. They are spending crores of rupees for that single purpose."

For a ‘Padrestan’

The creation in Assam of 'Nagaland' is a glaring example in point. That the open rebellion going on in the Naga Hills is all engineered by the Christian missionaries was accepted even by Pandit Nehru. But our Government is never tired of telling the country time and again that 'peace' has been established there, only to be followed on the next day by the news that some train was looted, some bridge was blown up or some of our army men were ambushed and killed! When it was asked in Parliament how the rebels had come in possession of such large quantities of arms and ammunition, the reply given was that, during the last war, when the Japanese were fleeing, being unable to carry the load of arms, they threw them away in the jungles and the Nagas took possession of them. But a report had appread in the press that during one of the clashes with our military some rebels were killed and their arms captured. The arms were of the latest American make with an imprint of the year of manufacture. It was 1955 and 1956. And we are asked byour leaders to believe that

the Nagas had secured those American arms made in 1955 and 1956, as far back as 1944! It is reported that the Nagas are in possession of even anti-aircraft guns of the latest model. It is also evident how these arms must have come into their possession. The American arms which come to Pakistan are handed over to the Christian missionaries in Assam.

Thus the revolt has continued and for the time being our leaders have partly accepted demand and set up Nagaland. The ominous feature about it is that it is under the direct charge of the Foreign Ministry and not of the Home Ministry which governs all other States in our country today. The pressure under which this concession was made is still continuing. This pressure is of two types. One is the internal rebellion, which is still continuing and gaining momentum in view of the partial success they have achieved. Even after the decision to form Nagaland, one of our planes was shot down. The second type of pressure is international. We know that Phizo, the rebel Naga leader, disappeared from our country with the help of Pakistan and some other countries and went to England. He was given asylum by a noted Christian missionary, Michael Scott, who abetted him at making various statements damaging our reputation. Our leaders, who are oversensitive with regard to their international reputation - whatever it may be! - thought it better to give a Nagaland than stake their reputation as peacemakers in the world. And now they have started 'peace talks' with the Naga rebels with a view to giving them greater autonomy, and included that gentleman Michael Scott in the 'peace mission'. To show themselves off as peacemakers, partition of the country seems to be a very cheap price for our leaders. Since that international pressure is also mounting, it will be little wonder if at no distant date Nagaland is separated and formed into an independent State ridden and dominated by the Christian fanatics.

Agents of World Strategy

There is already the demand for another separates Hill Sate round about Shillong in Assam inspired by the Christian missionaries. Of course, our leaders have categorically stated that their demands are fantastic and cannot be met. But we cannot be sure of what will happen in future. Because our experience tells us that whenever our leaders vehemently denounce a particular demand as fantastic, anti-national and so on, then it is a sure indication that they have already made up their mind to accede to it! That has been our uniform experience right from Partition down to the formation of Nagaland.

Then in Kerala, during the peoples agitation against the Communist Ministry, the Christian leaders used to say that it was a life and death struggle for the Christian Missions in Kerala. They went to the extent of saying, "Kerala shall be ruled either by the Catholics or by the Communists. And WE want to rule."

In a pamphlet circulated at an international gathering of Christian Fathers in Europe some years ago, a detailed plan was put forth to start centres of Christian influence all along our coast and right across the country through the Vindhyas and the Satpuras. That was the first stage of the plan “ to surround the Southern peninsula and make it Christian-dominated. Then the whole of the Himalayan belt was to be captured in the second sweep.

Some time back, news had leaked out in papers that an agreement had been reached* between the Christian missions in our country and the Muslim League that the two should join together and between themselves partition the country, the whole of the Gangetic plain between Punjab and Manipur going to the Muslims and the Peninsula and the Himalayas to the Christians.

A few years ago, there was an All India Conference of Christians wherein they were called upon to pledge themselves to establish

Christian Empire in Bharat. And one of our Central Ministers was present there to bless the proceedings.

Such is the role of Christian gentlemen residing in our land today, out to demolish not only the religious and social fabric of our life but also to establish political domination in various pockets and if possible all over the land. Such has been, in fact, their role wherever they have stepped-all under the alluring grab of bringing peace and brotherhood to mankind under the angelic wings of Jesus Christ. Jesus had called upon his followers to give their all to the poor, the ignorant and the downtrodden. But what have his followers done in practice? Wherever they have gone, they have proved to be not blood-givers but bloodsuckers? What is the fate of all those lands colonised by these so-called disciples of Christ? Wherever they have stepped, they have drenched those lands with the blood and tears of the natives and liquidated whole races. Do we not know the heart-rending stories of how they annihilated the natives in America, Australia and Africa? Why go so far? Are we not aware of the atrocious history of Christian missionaries in our own country, of how they carried sword and fire in Goa and elsewhere?

There is the story of Saint Xavier, who used to experience the highest joy of his life when he used to see the new converts trampling upon their former gods and goddesses, razing their temples to the ground and insulting their own parents and elders who remained Hindus. And even as recently as during the Congress rule (a de facto Christian rule?) in Kerala after the quitting of the British, hundreds of ancient and scared Hindu temples, including the famous one at Shabarimalai, were desecrated and their idols broken by the Christian vandals. It is the same Christian fanatics who smashed the Vivekananda Memorial Tablet on the Vivekananda Rock at Kanyakumari. Such are the men who come to us to preach that Christianity would shower bliss of peace and milk of human kindness on humanity!

So long as the Christians here indulge in such activities and consider themselves as agents of the international movement for the spread of Christianity, and refuse to offer their first loyalty to the land of their birth and behave as true children of the heritage and culture of their ancestors, they will remain here as hostiles.

16. Internal Threats

THE COMMUNISTS

After the British quit this land and we became free to shape our future national set-up, the discussion of various theories and 'isms' has become a live issue for us. No doubt we have opted for the Western type of democratic set-up. But have we been able to reap its beneficial fruits after all these years of experimentation? Instead of symbolising the collective will of the people, it has given rise to all sorts of unhealthy rivalries and forces of selfishness and fission.

Preparing Ground for Communism

A serious failure of democracy in our country is the growing menace of Communism, which is a sworn enemy of democratic procedure. In a bid not to be left behind the Communists in their economic appeal to the masses, our leaders are only making Communism more respectable by themselves taking up the Communist jargon and the Communist programmes. If the leaders imagine that they will be able to take away the wind out of the Communist sail by such tactics, they are sadly mistaken.

They also feel that economic development is the only defence against Communism. It is the constant dinning into the ears of the masses of the promise of 'higher standards of life', thus raising their expectations at a time when they cannot possibly be satisfied, that is aggravating the sense of frustration and paving the way for popular discontent and chaos. Nowhere do we find the appeal to higher sentiments like patriotism, character and knowledge; nor is there any stress on cultural, intellectual and moral development. It is only in such imbecile and despairing minds that the seeds of Communism strike root.

Adding Fuel to the Fire

The approach of the Western countries to the menace of Communism is contributing its own share in giving a fillip to the spread of Communism here. America believes that dollar aid will solve the problem of Communism. As experience had shown in the case of China and now Viet Nam, such aid will be of little avail without a corresponding building up of national character and morale. The countrywide propaganda that accompanies each one of their economic aids is only aggravating the 'economic consciousness' of the masses to the exclusion of those aspects which form the real backbone of a free and democratic life.

The westerners also suffer from a strange hallucination that the 'old Hinduism' must go if our country is to be saved from Communism. They feel that Christianity alone can stem the tide of Communism. Once, Arnold Toynbee bad truly described Communism as a 'Christian heresy' and strangely enough it is he who has now come forward to say that Christianity is the one answer to Communism. How can Christianity solve a problem which came up as a reaction due to its own deficiencies? Those who think Christianity alone can save this 'heathen country' should pause and ponder why Russia, the most orthodox country of Christendom, disowned Christ. In our own country, is it not significant that the province where the Christian population and influence is the greatest, Kerala, is also the biggest Communist pocket? If the Westerners believe that by pouring men and money to convert Hindus to Christianity they will save this country from Communism, they are only labouring under a suicidal self-deception. Because, the spread of Christianity shatters the ancient faith and nationalism of the people, and Communism takes root only where faith is shattered. That has been the major psychological factor in the growth of communism.

When Faith Goes Communism Comes

Man does not live by bread alone. He must have a faith to live by and die for. Without such a faith life loses its direction and meaning, and man begins to drift. He feels lost. It is an impossible state of being. Till the rise of science, Christianity provided the necessary faith for European life. But science made mincemeat of Christianity. It blasted the Christian concept of time, space, life and the world. However, Europe lost one sheet-anchor but gained another. It lost its faith in religion but gained a new faith in science. Indeed, science became its new religion. Then people believed science to be omniscient and omnipotent as any God thought of in any religion.

However, within a course of some centuries, science began disproving itself. The scientists began to confess their ignorance of the Universe. Einstein, than whom there has been no greater scientist in recent times, admitted the existence of a Reality beyond the reach of physical sciences. Thus, from the omniscient mood of the Victorian Era, the scientists felt themselves no more than picking pebbles on the shore with a whole ocean of knowledge lying unexplored before them. This collapse of faith in science left the Western man rudderless on an unexplored sea. The old faiths were dead and no new faiths were in sight. It was in this situation of vacuity of faith that some specious faiths came to fill the gap. One such faith was Communism.

So any attempt from whatever quarter, to uproot our ancient and life-giving faith, a faith, which has sustained us and produced the finest flowers of human culture, is bound to bring about sure national disaster.

Danger of Reactionary Approach

Various are the attempts going on to neutralise the appeal of Communism in our country. Some people feel that the Bhoodan movement launched by Vinobaji will take away the appeal of

Communism. On the contrary, with its Communistic slogan of 'land to the tiller' and with threats by some of his shortsighted followers like, "If you do not give of your own accord, Communists are bound to come up and take away your all by force" it will only give rise to an impression in the mass mind that after all Communism is correct and is inevitable. It will be an indirect sanction for Communism. Further, the masses will have a suspicious feeling that all such movements, which come up in the name of their uplift are only half-hearted and deceptive. They may very well say, "Now that the Communists are making headway, you want to come forward with all these reforms and promises! We would rather prefer the blunt Communists. They are at least honest and bold. They mean what they say and we can believe them." Thus, contrary to expectations, this movement may pave the way for Communists. In fact, to work merely with a view to counteracting Communism is always dangerous. It is only the inculcation of a right and positive faith that can make the masses rise above the base appeal of Communism.

There are some who feel that the growth of Communism is inevitable so long as economic disparity persists. But the fact is, economic disparity is not the real cause for mutual hatred on which the Communists thrive. The idea of dignity of labour is not properly imbibed by our people. For example, a rikshawala who makes a daily earning of 3 to 4 rupees is addressed as a 'fellow' and a clerk getting but Rs. 60 a month is addressed as 'Babuji'. It is this disparity in outlook in all walks of our life which creates hatred. This is a recent perversion that has entered our life. In our philosophy, there is no distinction of high or low in one's karma, i.e., duty. Every work is the worship of the same Almighty in the form of society. This spirit has to be revived once again.

‘Socialism by Ballot’

The threat of Communism has become real from another quarter in our country. And that is by the present policy of our Government who have declared 'Socialism' (same in content as Communism and differing only in the method of achievement) as their goal. In the first place, our leaders say that they will achieve Socialism by the ballot-box, and not by the bullet as was done in Russia and China. That only means that there is a difference between the people in Russia and China, and the people in our country. In Russia and China, probably the people were alive and kicking and therefore they, had to be cowed down by the bullet. Here our people are docile hero-worshipers. If the hero comes and says, "My dear friend, come on, bend forward, I want to behead you", our people will certainly bend forward and offer to be beheaded! With such docile people, why is the bullet required? A ballot-box is sufficient. If the leader says, "Vote for Socialism", the people will vote for it. If tomorrow they find that having voted for Socialism their independence is gone, and as individuals they have become only dead parts of a machine, they will take it as an ordinance of fate and submit to it.

Our people submitted to the Muslim rule for more than a thousand years, to the extent that even today we find people saying that Muslims were great godly persons! Some have even gone to the extent of saying that we must erect statues of Hyder who jailed his Hindu king and usurped his throne, and of his son Tippu who forcibly converted countless people to Islam, demolished many temples and molested a number of women! To this extent the infatuation still remains. When the British came, some persons said, "They have been sent from heaven." Some even said, "In the Bhavishya Purana, it has already been prophesied that our country would be ruled by a queen named Vikateshwari and she is none other than Queen Victoria herself"! With such a docile people a little propaganda is enough.

In John Bunyan's The Pilgrim's Progress, the Pilgrim is caught by the Giant. The Giant wants to murder him straightway but on advice from his wife tries to persuade him to commit suicide. The Giant says, "Why are you undergoing all the troubles of life? Nothing is sweeter than suicide. Choose whatever you like, knife, halter or poison, make an end of your miserable life and be relieved forever." He so convinces the Pilgrim that the latter gets ready to commit suicide. Just then a friend counsels the Pilgrim and prevents him from falling into the trap. The moral is, for innocent docile people, a little persuasion does the work of a bullet.

The Writing on the Wall

Under the grab of Socialism, what is it that is actually taking place? We find that all the measures being undertaken here are only an improved carbon copy of what has happened in China. The only difference is that these developments were brought about by brutal violence in China whereas here the same things are being done through polished propaganda. This will be quite clear to us if we compare the governmental measures of both countries. When the present Communist Government in China first came to power, they did not want any challenge to their absolute power. So they liquidated the old nobles, chiefs and industrialists and nationalized all industries. They liquidated the big landholders and ultimately the smaller zamindars and framers.

Here also, landlords were liquidated. Now the 17th Amendment has come by which even the smaller farmer, having even half an acre of land, is considered an estate holder, and the Government is empowered to take away his property practically without any compensation. Co-operative farming, collective farming, nationalisation of banks and industries and such socialistic doctrines are in the air. All this is, in a way, following the Chinese line step by step. Let us try to see close parallel and read the

writing on the wall. And before we are reduced to mere slaves and tools, beware!

Further, socialism is not a product of this soil. It is not in our blood and tradition. It has absolutely nothing to do with the traditions and ideal of thousands of years of our national life. It is a thought alien to crores of our people here. As such it does not have the power to thrill our hearts, and inspires us to a life of dedication and character. Thus we see that it does not posses even the primary qualification to serve as an ideal for our national life.

Unfit on All Counts

And finally, as we have already seen, Socialism (the same as Communism in its original form, as even Russia calls itself a Socialist State) was born as a reaction steeped in the theory of class conflict and has failed to deliver the goods in Russia itself. As a theory it was exploded long back and now it has been exploded in practice also.

Nowadays our leaders are trying to cover up the fatal defect of Socialism, i.e., the wiping out of the individual as a living entity, by coining new slogans like 'Democratic Socialism', 'Socialistic Democracy' and so on. As a matter of fact, the two concepts of Democracy and Socialism are mutually contradictory. Socialism cannot be democratic and Democracy cannot be socialistic. For, individual freedom, as we have seen, is the first faith with Democracy, whereas it is the first victim of Socialism. In Democracy, the majesty of the individual is held high, whereas, in Socialism, he is only a cog in the wheel, just a lifeless screw in the colossal machine called State.

Revive National Genius

Thus, after the quitting of the British, we find ourselves in a confused state of affairs trying to catch at something of each of the foreign theories and 'isms'. This is highly humiliating to a country, which has given rise to an all-comprehensive philosophy, capable of furnishing the true and abiding basis for reconstruction of national life on political, economic, social and all other planes. It would be sheer bankruptcy of our intellect and originality if we believe that human intelligence has reached its zenith with the present theories and 'isms' of the West. Let us therefore evolve our own way of life based on the eternal truths discovered by our ancient seers and tested on the touchstone of reason, experience and history.

PART THREE

THE PATH TO GLORY

Rousing National Consciousness



17. Meeting the Historic Need

The founder of the organisation used to put forth the aim of the Sangh in a small pithy sentence: "We have to organise and make our Hindu Society so powerful that no power on earth will dare cast an evil eye upon it." To fulfil this is the foremost duty that has devolved upon all the children of this great society.

Our Debt of Gratitude

What makes us say that we are duty-bound to devote ourselves to this mission of organising our society? Firstly, we are all born and brought up in this society. The happiness and security of our individual and family life have been made possible by the fact of our birth in this society.

Another important consideration is also there. Ours is an ancient and immortal society, which has given birth to the greatest personalities in all walks of life and has evolved the highest philosophy and the noblest social standards. The stamp of that greatness can be seen even to this day when others refer to a son of this soil as the descendant of a Rama, a Krishna and a Shankaracharya, in whose blood the glorious virtues of all those illustrious predecessors “ those world masters in every field of knowledge and action “ are inherited.

What does all this indicate? It is, that our birth in the Hindu Society has conferred this unique honour upon us, in addition to a happy physical sustenance, and opened the path for us to scale the sublime heights of those great souls.

Thus, in how many ways and how immensely are we indebted to our society! Then, is it befitting on our part to go on merely enjoying all its fruits and merits without caring to do our duty

towards it? It has been said in our scriptures that a man should live on what is left over after offering to society. Thus, it is our first duty to absolve ourselves from that debt of gratitude. Therein lies the fulfilment of our life.

Our Shastras declare that man is born with three kinds of debts-deva-rina, pitru-rina and rishi-rina. This life is given to us by the grace of gods. And hence we have to discharge that debt-deva-rina. We are born in the lineage of our ancestors to whom we have to express our gratitude, i.e., pitra-rina. And since we inherit the legacy of learning and culture bequeathed by our ancients, the duty of discharging rishi-rina devolves upon us.

How Shall We Serve?

Then, what is the way in which we can repay that debt? A true devotee says to the Almighty, "O Lord! How shall I worship Thee? Flower, sandal paste and water are all Thine. Thou art the Effulgence of the light arati that I wave. Everything is Thine. Then, what else is left to me but to offer all that Thou hast bestowed on me at Thy feet and remain as Thy humblest servant?" Right from the hoary times, our society has been described as our living form of God. Let us also adopt that form as our Chosen Deity and resolve to serve it all through our life as a token of our indebtedness.

What then is the type of service that we are to do? Many and varied are the possible ways of service. Giving food to the hungry, knowledge to the ignorant or medicine to the diseased “ each is a type of service. That is, true service implies removing the deficiency in the object of our service. Now, what is the chief deficiency in our society? Doubtless, our society presents an agonising picture of ignorance, poverty, untouchability, immorality and so on. And we see so many efforts being put forth by well-meaning persons to remedy those defects. It is but natural

that we should have kind feelings towards them. But the question is, can we call these efforts the real type of service that our society is in dire need of today? Will they lead to the ultimate, abiding welfare of our society? It would be futile to treat and bandage the superficial boils, coming up one after another, when the blood has become infected? It is only when the root cause is remedied that the malady is cured. What is that root cause?

Picture: Past and Present

Is it true that our society, in the past too, presented the same picture of poverty and misery as we witness today? History has a totally different story to narrate. Some of the foreign travellers who had come here in the past have left their eye-witness accounts of what they saw here. Those writings say. "The people here are happy and contented. There are no destitutes, no beggars. The people leave their houses unlocked for years when they go out on pilgrimage, without a trace of fear of theft. There are very few cases of moral aberration; they are all highly virtuous, generous and reliable in their dealings. They are a virile and powerful race, wealthy and wise" Those foreign visitors could have had no ulterior motives in recording such glowing descriptions. There was no iron curtain in our country as there is in Russia or China today. They had moved about for several years as they liked throughout the length and breadth of our country. Then, those accounts must be relied upon as correct beyond a shadow of doubt.

It was not as if, as is often misunderstood, our people had achieved eminence only in the spiritual field to the neglect of other walks of the day-to-day practical life. Authentic ancient records conclusively show that we were many centuries ahead of the times in every branch of science and art. The absolutely

rustless, shining, 200-year-old pillar, Ashoka Stambha, stands to this day as an unbeaten challenge in metallurgy.

There is an anecdote narrated in our old books and also in foreign records. One of the Roman kings suffered from a strange disease, which could not be cured by anyone in his kingdom. He sought the help of our country, then considered a master in the science of medicine. One of our royal physicians went there, opened his skull and carried out an operation on his brain. The king was cured of the disease. The physician stayed there for three more years to instruct those people in that science and then returned, laden with great honours. It must be remembered that even at this advanced stage of surgery, operation of the brain is taken to be a very serious risk.

The modern plastic surgery too was a gift to the outside world by our ancient masters in Ayurveda. The concept of Zero which we gave to the world is based on our philosophy. We have considered the entire Creation as Zero and the God as One. It is only when the Zero i.e., the Creation, is placed after One i.e., the Creator, that it gets the value, otherwise not. The decimal system was also a brain-child of the Hindus. Verily, it is these gifts which have laid the foundation for the phenomenal superstructure of mathematics that we see today.

We were never a homebound people either. With the resounding cry of Krinvanto vishwam aryam (Elevate the Mankind), our saints and sages walked to the four corners of the world. Our benign influence extended over vast regions of the earth and our flag flew over many lands. Pilgrims came form distant lands to have a glimpse of that glory here. Students came here from far and near to drink at the pure and perennial springs of human knowledge. Countless are the living and eloquent witness standing in the form of temples and images, paintings and carvings, languages and customs, epics and idylls, literature and

art in all these countries, giving proof of that all-pervasive cultural potency of our race in those days. It is not a fact that our ancestors moved out of our country only after the advent of Buddha. Our missionaries had reached the shores of America even before. The Bouddha Bhikshus only continued that tradition. At home and abroad, we excelled as a virile, and at the same time, a benevolent people.

Then, why this present-day despicable state of affairs in our nation? How has the spectre of misery and vice come to stalk this land of affluence and culture? Why has Bharat, once the mother of the world giving succour and shelter to many a refugee race, become a mere mendicant on the streets of the world? Today we go about begging at the doors of all foreigners not only for food and money but for ideals and values of life as well. We are thereby parading before the whole world utter bankruptcy of our intelligence and originality. What, then, is at the root of all this abject destitution and debasement?

Are Foreigners Responsible?

Many of our thinkers of the last few decades concluded that our slavery for the past thousand years is the main cause for this degradation. They had read in history that the Muslim invaders who had settled down here as rulers had carried out a systematic destruction of all our points of national faith and honour. They had desecrated our womanhood, demolished temples and places of pilgrimage and converted large numbers to their faith at the point of sword or with the lure of material pleasures. The new converts too, having lost their national moorings, perpetuated the same fanatic rule and the same heinous deeds of the foreign invader.

The English who came next were more shrewd and polished. They did not openly resort to desecration and destruction. With

their insidious propaganda they attempted to subvert the age-old faith and solidarity of the nation. They introduced a vicious system of education, so as to de-nationalise, de-culturalise and de-vitalise our people and thereby consolidate their empire. And our so-called educated fell an easy prey to their trap and began to ape the customs and thoughts of the white man and deride all that is our own. Having thus been uprooted from the mother soil of our heritage, our nation began to fade and wither away, leaving a bitter trail of vice and evil behind.

Thus, having before them this lurid picture of the last one thousand years of foreign domination, those thinkers came to the conclusion that it is the foreign rule, which was at the root of all the present-day ills. Accordingly, they started to put in efforts to throw off the foreign yoke. And it was quite natural too.

But the matter does not rest at that. The question, how the foreigners came to establish themselves here, remains. Is it a fact that those invaders subjugated and ruled over so vast a country as ours on the sheer strength of their own superiority? No. It is writ large on every page of our history, that our people were incomparably superior to invaders in all the factors like population, armed forces, statesmanship, valour, wealth, wisdom, etc., which normally lead a people to victory.

Greater in All Respects

We had a free and flourishing national life of our own in our motherland. We had a unique social order and highly evolved political institutions. Our statesmen of those days had a thorough grasp of the principles of statecraft. The Artha Shastra of Kautilya is a volume, which has few equals in the entire world literature on politics. This small treatise is a veritable treasure-house of thoughts of such abiding and inherent worth as to cross all boundaries of clime and time. And it was not mere dry knowledge

encased in a book but a living and practical guide in the actual statecraft of those days. The striking power of our armies was a terror to the invaders from outside. In fact, we had previously put to rout the barbaric hordes of Shakas and Hunas, and whoever remained over here were absorbed in our all-embracing culture.

A similar fate overtook the so-called World Conqueror, Alexander of Greece. We are taught in our history books, written by Westerners, that Alexander the Great gave back the kingdom he had conquered in our country as a gesture of generosity. The same Alexander who gloated over his atrocities in Persia and in his intoxication of victory had committed all sorts of barbaric excesses wherever he had stepped, becomes a generous man immediately he steps on the soil of Bharat! And we are expected to believe in such a history! The world has yet to see a generous Western conqueror. Even after nearly two thousand years of the much boasted Christian training the generosity that is shown by them to their own brother-Christians in the conquered nations of the West makes hair-raising reading. The facts as revealed by history are that Alexander could not withstand the shattering blows of even our small hill-chieftains and had to run for his life. Even then, he could not escape the deadly arrow of one of our heroes. Mortally wounded, and not willing to risk a retreat by the same route, he resorted to another route. But he could proceed only up to Iran where he finally entered his grave. Another Greek invasion by Seleucus was also effectively smashed by Chandragupta, the great Emperor of Magadha.

But, a House Divided

However, by about that time, a set-back in our national solidarity was gradually creeping in. During the long peace which, succeeded the great battle of Mahabharata the whole nation was lulled by a sense of security into a sort of stupor. The cohesive impulse, which results from an awareness of impending common

danger, having ceased to function for centuries, a gradual though imperceptible falling away from a living consciousness of one nation resulted in creating little independent principalities and weakened the nation. Kingship became the object of the peoples loyalty and supplanted the national concept. Mutual jealousy and rivalry between the various kingdoms poisoned their relations, thus making our nation a house divided against itself. Kings were drunk with their own personal glory and prestige and lost the power to discriminate between the friend and the foe. We forgot even the first lessons of national defence that the enemy who plundered a part of our land would one day plunder the whole of it and that national freedom is indivisible. We also forgot that the result would be disastrous to one and all, that things dear and sacred to us, all our pelf and prosperity would be razed to dust. Thus the enemies who trembled at our might before, came here as honoured guests later, and became the conquerors and rulers.

The painful story of how our country fell before the Muslim invasion is before us. Within a century of the death of their Prophet, the Muslims had overrun almost the whole of Southern Europe, Spain, Portugal and portions of Asia, and established themselves securely right up to the Pacific Ocean. With a far-flung empire spread form the Atlantic to the Pacific at their back, they turned their greedy eyes towards our country. They tried to penetrate at two points, one through Sind and the other through Afghanistan across the Himalayas into Punjab. But, even with such a vast empire and huge armies at their command, waves after waves of their invasion were effectively repulsed for over two centuries by the small Hindu principalities defending our North-Western frontiers, thus proving that Hindu military skill and valour were incomparably superior to the aggressive power of the Muslim horders. The reason, however, for the ultimate collapse of the Hindu resistance was that internal dissensions and treachery had enfeebled their ranks and the rest of the country had failed to

give them succour from time to time to carry on the battle for the defence of motherland.

Nor did our country wake up and stand united at least after the first shock of Muslim invasion. The suicidal story of dissensions and betrayal continued. To Ghazni Mohammed, who had set out to loot and desecrate sacred Somnath, our own chieftains acted as guides and aides. Again, it was Jayachand who invited Mohammed Ghori. Thus it was a Hindu king who helped the foe to establish a foreign reign for the first time in the scared capital of Indraprastha. The tribe of Jayachand fast multiplied. Raja Mansingh became the cornerstone of Akbars vast empire. It was he who came down upon Rana Pratap who alone had kept the torch of freedom bruning bright in those days. Mirja Raja Jayasingh, Jasavantsingh and others, all Hindu generals, became the powerful arms of Aurangzeb, the notorious anti-Hindu fanatic. It was they who came to destroy Shivaji on behalf of Aurangzb.

Our disintegration had gone to such an extent that Bakhtiyar Khilji who had set out eastward from Delhi, it is said with just eighteen men, carried his sword right up to Bengal, leaving behind a bitter trail of massacres, mass conversions, abduction of women, destruction of temples and breaking of kingdoms. Thousands of students and teachers of the world-famous Nalanda University were all mercilessly butchered by him. He put to sword the entire population of the city also. He made a bonfire of the library there, the treasure-house of knowledge accumulated over thousands of years. Finally he established his rule in Bengal.

Manucci, an Italian officer in the army of Aurangzeb, wrote in his diary after personally going round the country. "If any invader descends today with an army of thirty thousand through the Khyber pass, he can easily conquer and rule over the whole of Hindustan." Such records and instances are engraved on every page of our history of those times telling the heart-rending story

of internecine struggles, betrayals and of joining hands with the enemy to enslave our country.

The suicidal story of betrayal continued unabated even after the English came. We had shut our eyes to lessons of Muslim invasion. Hindu captains and soldiers shed their blood and also the blood of freedom fighters to make the British empire safe and secure. our wealthy merchants helped the British with money. Our resources, in men, money and intellect were placed at their feet. They were harnessed to forge our own fetters. As an English historian has written, "Even if all the able-bodied persons in England had been armed and organised into an army, they could not have conquered or much less ruled in peace over India by themselves. It was in fact the local people who, out of internal strifes, carved out the kingdom for us. Even to this day they are content to remain as docile slaves of England."

History Warns

The verdict of history is therefore too clear to be mistaken. It was the absence of national consciousness, of the feeling of being the organic limbs of a single national entity with the resultant mutual hatred, discord, jealousy and internecine quarrels to gain little selfish ends that has eaten into the vitals of our nation over the last thousand years.
It was not the Muslims or the English who were our enemies but we ourselves. The Gita says,

"Hyaatmaiva hyaatmano bandhu-
raatmaiva ripuraatmanah"

(*We are our own friends; we are our own foes.*) Alas, in our case, the truth of the latter half has been proved!

So we say that it is no use cursing the external aggressors as being responsible for our degeneration and destruction. After all it is in the nature of predatory nations to overrun, plunder and destroy other weaker countries. If a serpent bites a person, that is not its fault. That is in its very nature. The fault lies with the person who does not exercise caution and protect himself against the possible attack. Unfortunately, during the last one thousand years of our history, even after repeated experiences of disgraces and disasters, we failed to learn the basic lesson that we alone are responsible for our downfall and unless we eradicate that fatal weakness from ourselves we connot hope to survive as a nation.

Have we, at least now, learnt that lesson? We nowadays hear that we have won freedom, that there has been all“round awakening and therefore there is no need to worry about our past failings and so on. But is it true that we won freedom solely on the strength of our valour and sacrifice? If it is a fact, then, how is it that the British left Burma and Ceylon also where there was no freedom struggle at all? How did Pakistan “ a new independent State “ come into being without the least sacrifice on the part of the Muslims? And why did our leaders also acquiesce in it against all their declarations and pledges of securing the independence of undivided Bharat? The fact is, the British had little energy left in them after the blood-bath of the last world war to run a vast and far-flung empire. They were not sure of the loyalty of the Indian Army either. And the British, shrewd as they were, managed to quit all these countries preserving their goodwill and creating for themselves a permanent base in the from of Pakistan. In an old book of Sir John Strachey, the author had stated more than half a century ago that if the British had perchance to quit India, they would do so only after dividing in into Hindu India and Muslim India. The only difference now is that not only did our leaders concur with the British in carrying out that plan but have gone fruther and cut up the country into Muslim India and non-Muslim India!

The Law of Cause and Effect

The formation of Pakistan has only proved that we have not as yet learnt the lesson of history and remedied our fatal weakness. At the time of the quitting of the British, the Hindus were too disorganised and the national leadership too demoralised to face even the small sporadic onslaught of the Muslims and the machinations of the British. And Partition was the result. History repeated itself. Alas, the only lesson that we learn from our history is that we do not learn anything from history! Big slices of our motherland " half of Punjab, half of Bengal, Sind and the Frontier Province " once again fell into enemy hands.

These parts were once the glory of our Hindu Nation. Punjab is the birth-place of Vedas " the holiest of our holy heritage. Our great rishis meditatd on the banks of the Sindhu. Bengal has been cradle-land of saints, poets and revolutionaries. NWFP was our life-line of defence for millennia. The writ of our free and powerful Hindu State ran all over there. But centuries ago those parts fell to Muslim invasion. Later on, they shook off the Muslim yoke, only to come under the rule of another enemy, the British. Now they have once again fallen under the Muslim heels.

Lakhs of Hindu brothers and sisters were butchered in cold blood in these provinces after they were handed over to the Muslim bondage in 1947. The honour of our womanhood was trampled upon. Conversion at the point of sword took place on a massive scale. The inhuman atrocities which the Muslim hordes had perpetrated on the Hindu people a thousand years ago were re-enacted. The horror is still continuing with the same barbarity, with the result that tens of thousands of our displaced brothers and sisters are continuously pouring into West Bengal day after day, the very images of human wrecks.

The root cause of our national tragedy then, a thousand years ago, and now, a thousand years later, is the same “ the utter lack of organised and unified life among the Hindus, the children of this soil. The law of cause and effect knows no limits and place. Every page of our history of the past thousand years is a mute witness to this bitter truth operating on our national plane.

Let us now turn to the conditions in the areas, which came into our hands when the British left. Is our freedom and hounour secure at least here?

The Tribe of Jayachands

After the first partition, there has been again partition of Kashmir. At one time, our late Prime Minister Pandit Nehru had even expressed his willingness to offer the Pakistan-occupied part of Kashmir to Pakistan in a bid to solve the so-called Kashmir problem. The offer of plebiscite in Kashmir was also mooted by our leaders. What does this indicate? If there is an injury to a limb of the body, then, should that particular limb be asked to decide its fate by itself? On the contrary, is it not the complete body, which has to decide? Similarly, if at all there is to be a plebiscite, it should be conducted in the whole of our country. Plebiscite in Kashmir alone would only mean that the consciousness of the unity of our motherland has all but disappeared from our mind.

There are, in addition, serious cleavages developing among our people on any and every issue, whether of language, caste, sect or party. Everyone stands up and says that he wants a state for his own language, a state for his own sect, and if at all he is prepared to stay in the Union, he wishes that it should be a loose federation with greater and greater powers for his state and the Central authority prevailing only in name.

The same curse of mutual hatred and jealously, which turned our national life into a shambles during the last thousands years, is continuing to pay its devil-dance under the new garbs of love of province, party, language, community, sect, etc. Once a prominent leader of Andhra had publicly declared that if a separate Andhra State was not formed he would take the aid of Russia to achieve it. A prominent Sikh leader once threatened that if Punjabi Suba was not carved out then all the Sikhs would turn Communists. With the Chinese armies poised on our frontiers, such a statement could convey only one meaning, and that is, an invitation and an assurance to the aggressor of help from inside, in exchange for his help in carving out a separate state. Some years ago that leader was hobnobbing with Pakistan in a bid to get help from that country. Can we say that the race of Jayachands and Mansinghs has disappeared from this land?

History Repeating

The same fatal disease of the absence of national consciousness, which made us lose the power to discriminate between the friend and the foe is continuing as before. Once in Nagpur there was a conference of some persons calling themselves non-Brahmins. I was surprised to find Muslim and Christian speakers also addressing the conference. When I inquired of this from one of the organisers of the conference, he said, "Well, they are also non-Brahmins"! How strange that they could not recognise the simple fact that the Hindus, whatever their denominations of caste or sect, formed a single society and the Muslims and Christians belonged to an alien and often hostile camp!

It may be inconceivable, but is nevertheless a hard fact, that during the 1957 elections, a Muslim was elected from Ambala constituency in Punjab, where he was the only Muslim voter and all others were Hindus who, hardly a decade ago, had suffered

unspeakable atrocities at the hands of the Muslims. Such is the suicidal, self-oblivious condition of our society.

No part of the country is free from these internecine quarrels. Everywhere the ground is being prepared by our own people for the enemies to step in and fortify their positions. The anit-Bengali riots in Assam in July 1960 resulting in the exodus of Bengali Hindu has only profited the Muslims by reducing the percentage of Hindus in that vulnerable State. The mutual hatred and discord between Assamis and Bengalis has only helped the Muslims to intensify their atrocities on the Hindus in general in that province.

In fact, we lost Srihat (Sylhet) district to Pakistn only because of the same Assami-Bengali discord. In 1947 there was a plebiscite in Srihat to decide whether that district was to remain in Bharat or go to Pakistan. The Hindus, torn with Assami-Bengali quarrels and jealousies, did not care to vote at all. But the Muslims being politically alert had immensely mobilised their numbers from far and near and solidly voted for Pakistan. Such is the sordid story of how we lost Srihat to Pakistan even through it had a Hindu majority.

The Foreigners Trap

The utter lack of consciousness among our people of belonging to one country and one culture has made them a fertile field for any scheming foreigner to sow seeds of disruption. Even the so-called intelligentsia are easily swept off their feet by such insidious propaganda. For example, the movement for a separate Dravidanad owes its origin to the scheming brain of a foreigner. It was a foreign Christian missionary, who first toured every town and village in Tamil Nadu about eighty years ago and carried on an incessant and vicious propaganda that Tamil culture. Tamil language and everything Tamil differed fundamentally from the rest of the Bharatiya culture, language, etc, and that the Tamilians

formed an independent nation by themselves. He even gave a distorted interpretation to Tirukkural to make his poisonous theory palatable to the common people. But the wonder is that even the so-called intellectuals are not able to see the trap laid for them. In fact, some of them seem to take a pride in playing the enemys game. The arguments advanced by the so-called thought-givers of the present movement are only parrot-like repetitions of those of the foreign missionary.

A favourite argument in support of the Dravidanad Movement runs as follwos: "Even in the past, though Bharat was culturally one, there had always been several states. So what harm is there, if now too, we form ourselves into a separate state in the interest of our material welfare and at the same time continue to consider Bharat culturally and spiritually one, with our people going round Bharat for pilgrimage etc. as before?" It is true that in the past there were many small principalities, though we have remained culturally one throughout. But it is also equally true that there had always been an irresistible tendency among the prominent rulers of the land to bring the whole country under one administrative unit. The Rajasuya and the Ashwamedha Yajnas had but one chief motive and that was to bring the whole of Bharat under the supreme political authority of a single Chakrawarti. The performer of these Yajnas had no selfish motives such as exploitation or suppression of the people in other kingdoms. He would only demand the allegiance of the smaller principalities to one supreme central authority. For the rest, he would leave them in peace as before.

Moreover, just as history has recorded the existence of several states, it has also recorded the bitter truth that it was the existence of so many smaller principalities, which in course of time turned mutually exclusive and hostile, that paved the way for the foreign invaders to subjugate the entire country, including all such states, for the last one thousand years and more. History has amply

proved that the fortunes of any one part of the country are inseparably linked with those of the rest of the country. And especially, when material welfare is the only incentive, as in the case of the demand for a separate Dravidanad, some foreign power is bound to make it a pawn in its hands by throwing material baits. That would result, as in the past, in the ruination of not only the rest of Bharat but of that so-called Dravidanad itself.

The Poisonous Seed

That the framers of our present Constitution also were not firmly rooted in the conviction of a single homogeneous nationhood is evident from the federal structure of our Constitution. Our country is now described as a Union of States. Those that were merely provinces in the former set-up are now given the status of States, with many exclusive powers. In fact, it was the fragmentation of our single national life in the past into so many exclusive political units that sowed the seeds of national disintegration and defeat. The present federal structure has in it the same seeds of disruption, which are already sprouting in the form of conflicts between States on boundary issues, allocation of river waters, etc. The quarrels have now assumed a high status and are officially termed as boundary disputes, river water disputes, etc., as if they are disputes between two sovereign independent countries! One of the leaders of Maharashtra once stated that he had no time or desire to think of the Chinese aggression on our borders so long as the Karnataka-Maharashtra border dispute was not settled to his satisfaction?

Even during the present times of serious food crisis, the venomous fans of provincialism have, instead of withdrawing in the face of dire misery of the millions thrown into the jaws of starvation, only injected a further dose of poison into the body-politic. In 1963-64, Madhya Pradesh and Punjab had a surplus stock of wheat. But those State Governments were not prepared to

give it to their neighbouring States. Newspapers had reported that in Punjab the surplus wheat had begun to rot and had to be used as fodder for the cattle. But Punjab Government was not prepared to spare a single grain to the neighbouring starving State U.P. It was only when the Centre brought pressure upon the Punjab Government that it agreed to give one-fifth of what UP. had asked for. That was also not as a help to the suffering neighbour but only in return for liquor and sugar which U.P. had in retaliation refused to supply to Punjab! Wheat can come to our doors from America some ten thousand miles away from our shores but it cannot reach from a surplus State to the neighbouring starving State in our own country! What a shame!

Recently, the Election Commission has evolved a new formula for recognising political parties. The system of recognising parties on a nationwide basis has been given up in favour of recognition on State basis. It only indicates that the mental working of the persons at the helm of affairs is dominated by the consciousness of separateness of State units and not of the indivisible unity of the entire nation. On the one hand, they pass resolutions on national integration and, on the other, in the actual conduct of national affairs, frame policies that strike at the very concept of national unity!

These are all ominous straws in the wind. And the greatest danger is yet to come. The poisonous theory of linguistic states has aggravated the claims for right of self-determination and right of secession. It may be that in our present Constitution the right of secession is not conceded. But let us not forget that the ruling Congress party has committed itself long ago to that principle which in fact sowed the seed for the partition of our motherland. It is also a fact that Congress has not till today repudiated that previous resolution. With the same Congress leadership continuing and with the tempo of provincial and linguistic jealousies and hatred increasing, a day may come when the

Constitution also will be suitably amended to incorporate the right of secession. Already in the case of Berubari (in West Bengal) we have seen the Constitution being amended (in 1959) to empower the parliament-which in fact means the ruling party-to give away parts of our motherland to foreign States.

With such amendments striking at the very heart of the Constitution coming up every now and then, people are exhorted to pledge themselves to uphold the sanctity of the Constitution and the integrity of the country! And who are those that administer the pledge? The determined disrupters of the constitution and the partition experts of our country! Can mockery go further?

With such germs of disintegration eating into the vitals of our nation, will it be safe to assume that the root disease, which resulted in our misery and ignominious slavery in the past and which has today taken a more terrible form than ever before, will not nibble away at our present freedom in course of time?

The Basic Cure

Under these conditions, what is the best type of service that we can render to society? Obviously, it is to remove this basic disease of the loss of national consciousness and cohesion and build a strong, well-organised and self-sustaining national life. Then alone will our independence remain firm and secure. It would be futile to expect to only go on enjoying fruits while ignoring the roots. For some time, no doubt, the tree gives fruits even if it is infected with disease. But those fruits will be unhealthy, dry and tasteless. And so is the fruit of independence that we have got today, exhibiting various types of diseases. The reason is that the national roots have not gone deep into the minds and hearts of our people. If we continue to neglect the roots, after a time, even those fruits will disappear with only trunk of the tree standing dry

and bare. If we take care of the roots, fruits will take care of themselves. There is no need to borrow fruits from outside and stick them on to the tree. We should, therefore, strive to deepen our national roots so that we can stand free and erect amidst all tempests in the world.

How is this to be done? Can it be done by merely establishing new industries or byeconomic planning? No. The patient, if his internal disease is to be cured, needs medicine and not things like dainty dishes and drinks. In that weak condition, he will be unable even to drive away a dog, which may happen to raid and eat away all that is served to him. The fate of our body-politic is not different. Unless our society is cured of its internal malady of disunity and self-forgetfulness and made nationally alert and organised, it will remain incapable of enjoying prosperity in the world. Without this prerequisite, any attempt to achieve mere material glory may ever turn out to be a cruse rather than a service to society. History tells us that it was boundless affluence that attracted the barbaric hordes of invaders to our land. We had not the organised strength to protect it and as a result we find ourselves in the present predicament of abject poverty and misery, having lost all that glory to those depredators.

We have to resolve to eradicate that basic malady by making our mother-society once again united, organised, vigilant and resurgent with an intense spirit of national consciousness and cohesion? To that end, let us approach every son of this soil with the message of one united nationhood and forge them all into a mighty, organised whole bound with ties of mutual love and discipline. Such an alert, organised and invincibly powerful national life alone can hope to stand with its head erect in the present turmoils of the war-torn world.

18. Wanted a Unitary State

The Report of the S.R.C. is out for about a fortnight. Prominent persons in the political field stated giving free expression to their reactions to the recommendations of the Commission even before the report was officially published. Nobody seems to be satisfied. The whole atmosphere is charged with antagonism to the report. Feelings are rising high. All legislative groups are giving free vent to feelings of antagonism towards one another. No one group appears to be in a mood to co-operate with, and live side by side with another in one common administrative unit. Antagonism has been so intensified and aggravated as to take the form of deep-rooted hostility.

The British Propaganda

One cannot help remembering the propaganda the British Bureaucrat had made about this country and the people. He has emphatically been telling all the world to bear in mind that this is not one country but a continent like what modern Europe is " an extensive piece of land comprising many countries, many peoples, many nationalities all with their distinct racial, cultural and linguistic features. He has been warning all to be undeceived about the complexion of the people here, upholding that they are not one people at all in the sense of the unity of the people of England or France or Germany, but a conglomeration of numerous peoples having less in common with one another and having more differences with one another than even the peoples inhabiting the various countries of Europe; that ethnologically they are all of different racial stock; historically they have come to migrate into this land from some unknown home to take up their habitation here; politically they have been successive raiders and invaders ultimately settling down in the fertile territory and as a result, bearing towards one another inherent hostility latterly

become latent and less prone to manifest itself in the shape of open violence; linguistically strangers to one another; culturally of different standards; and religiously so far divided as to be always ready to fly at each others throat.

The differences especially emphasised, and to a great extent fanned by them, were between the Hindus and the Muslims, the Dravidas and the Aryans, the various sects such as the Jains and the Sikhs as against the rest of the Hindus, between the various castes each against the rest, more especially between the Brahmin and the non-Brahmin. They never tired of telling the world, and particularly to our own people, that it was their providential existence in the country as the sovereign power which had held all these forces of dissension in check and prevented the country from continuing to be a gruesome scene of violence, bloodshed, incessant, intermittent, internecine war, insecurity to life, honour and property; that they had supplied a stable government, just, merciful and progressive; and that it was only because of them, and during their continuance in power, that the sense of common motherland, patriotism and of a common nationality was being gradually forged out of this bewildering mass of heterogeneous, and often incompatible, peoples.

Leaders on Test

And for a time it did appear that one common love for the motherland had been infused, or had been renovated, among the people throughout the length and breadth of this land of Bharat; that, founded upon this love, a sense of one people and one nationality had been forged. All the leaders of the people spoke in terms of one nation and seemed to manifest a genuine faith in it. All voiced this great sentiment and tried to rouse the people to fight for the freedom of the country form the yoke of the Britisher. And it seemed that the whole mass of people had caught the sentiment.

But the Britisher never tired of reiterating and emphasising the differences, which he conceived and tried to inculcate in the people. He prophesied that with his withdrawal the land would be given to internecine feuds of all types and all order would be shattered, total chaos would prevail. With this he tried to justify his continuance “ holding absolute imperialistic sway over our country. Our leaders, however, fancied that this was mere propaganda, untrue, if not actually vicious, and intensified the struggle for freedom in the belief that ideal of one nation had been realised as an actual fact by themselves and, following them, by all the citizens of the land. Eventually the Britisher was compelled, by force of circumstances, his shattered post-war condition and the pressure of international situation, to relax his grip over this country and give up governing the people entrusting that responsibility to the leaders, who had been so vociferously and persistently demanding self-government. And the time arrived when the vaunt of the leaders that they had forged and realised one common national life was to be put to test.

The Failures

What is the result of the test? To be honest it cannot be said that we have passed the test successfully. The first and most cruel blow to the professions of One country, One Nation was dealt by the acceptance of the unhappy partition of our mother-Bharatabhoomi. It meant an acknowledgement that the Muslims formed a distinct and antagonistic national community, which had been tied down to live in this land with the Hindu Nation and which won for itself a distinct state by vivisection of the country in which they had originally come as invader and where they had been trying to settle down as conquerors. In spite of their protestations to the contrary, and vehement attempts to repudiate the two-nation theory indulged in by some “ shall we say, indiscreet people? “ the acceptance and, now, the justification of Partition, and the resultant separate Muslim State carved out of

the body of the Motherland has clearly given the lie to all these protestations and proved that verbal professions and essential beliefs were not in harmony and that all along, somewhere in the background of the thought processes of all these eminent leaders, there did abide the belief in the existence of a separate Muslim nation justly claiming a distinct state within the borders of what all claimed as one Motherland- fractioning the land and thus evincing an innate disbelief in the oneness of the Motherland as well.

This misuse of the slogan of the right of self-determination has been extended to Kashmir, and now to Goa also. To say that Kashmiris shall determine their own future is to repudiate the oneness of the country and of the people here in Bharat. Then came our present Constitution converting our country into a number of almost distinct units each with a state of its own and all federated into one Union. When one pauses to think of the conditions in which makers of this Constitution lived when they framed this Constitution one sees that the atmosphere then was extreemely congenial to the formation and evolution of a Unitary State "One Country, One Legislature, One Executive Centre running the administration throughout the country- an expression of one homogeneous solid nation in Bharat or what remained of it then. But mind and reason of the leaders were conditioned by the obsession of federation of states where each linguistic group enjoyed a wide autonomy as one people with its own separate language and culture.

At the Root of Federation

As far back as 1923 the Indian National Congress, which was then the only political party in the country claiming to represent the whole of the people, had envisaged such a federal pattern for our land and had opted for linguistic states going into the composition of that federation. What made them declare that to be

the end for which they were working, is not clear. But in this connection a statement reported to have been made by a Conservative Member of the British Parliament expounding the need of provincial legislatures, that this step will eventually lead to a situation when, if British were to withdraw, the country would be divided into half a dozen or more mutually exclusive and mutually hostile linguistic states, seems to give the clue as to the origin from which this inspiration to establish linguistic states and their federation in the country, may have been inherited by the makers of that declaration.

Committed thus to establishing a federation of linguistic states, the Constitution which was ultimately adopted could not but be of federal structure accepting for the time being the existing provincial boundaries and exalting the erstwhile provinces to the status of almost autonomous states. The question of reorganisation of state boundaries and demand for fulfilling the promise of the establishment of linguistic states was to be met with later, and now the S.R.C. has come forward with recommendations apparently unsatisfactory to all sections of the people. And the atmosphere is evidently one of mutual distrust, lack of goodwill, greedy clamour for grabbing more territory, exhibiting a rueful picture of so many wolves growling at one another over a carcass. The spectacle presented is so very painful. It seems as though the leaders are vying with one another in trying to justify the boast of the British Imperialist that but for his heavy hand over the affairs of the country the people would tear one another to pieces and the country would be steeped in confusion worse confounded.

Our Future at Stake

Why is all this happening? Why are all the professions of unity of the motherland and of the nation torn to shreds? Were these professions at all real? The present sorry state of affairs forces

upon us the conclusion that those in charge of affairs in the struggle for freedom from the British yoke never realised that this was One country, One People and One Nation. The countrywide unity, temporarily manifested, was not the outcome of the positive understanding of our age-long national entity, of a realisation that the variety seeming to baffle those not conversant with the mode of our national thought and generous outlook granting full freedom for expression and evolution to all individuals and groups without disrupting the grand harmony of one homogeneous National Being " was just an expression of the richness of vitality of life, of successful synthesis referring the seeming difference to a deep fundamental unity, but was a mere patch-work, a temporary truce called to meet a common imperialistic adversary, a short-lived confederation invoked for the limited purpose of meeting a common danger born out of a negative feeling of antagonism to the rulers commonly foreign to all confederates, as a result of reaction to the British domination. That is why, we infer, as soon as the antagonistic British withdrew from the scene, the patched-up unity has fallen to pieces for want of a common adversary necessitating a united front to combat it with.

This is very doleful picture of our present condition. As we try to look ahead a dreary future looms before us, steeped in the darkness of despair about a better future. With the leaders guiding the destiny of the country today lacking in a positive understanding of the oneness of our holy motherland, of the living unity immortally underlying the rich variety in which eternal national consciousness has been always manifesting itself, and, as a result, indulging in encouraging fissions and fragmentations, it will be unwise to entertain any hopes for a bright future. Even our bare existence as a respectable free nation is in jeopardy and, in a world inhabited by power-seeking war-mongering peoples, our existence is precariously at the mercy of whimsical chance which may, at any moment, deluge the world in a dreadful struggle,

form being submerged in which we may not hope to succeed. A house divided against itself is bound to fall.

There Is a Remedy

Dismal thoughts these. But there is no reason to give ourselves up to despair, for there is a remedy. The remedy lies in rooting out all tendencies towards separatism, all sentiments denying the firm faith in the oneness of the motherland and shaking free form all words and actions calculated to produce ideas contrary to the realisation of the oneness of our national life.

Towards this end the most important and effective step will be to bury deep for good all talk of a federal structure of our countrys Constitution, to sweep away the existence of all autonomous or semi-autonomous states within the one State viz., Bharat and proclaim One Country, One State, One Legislature, One Executive with no trace of fragmentational, regional, sectarian, linguistic or other types of pride being given a scope for playing havoc with our integrated harmony. Let the Constitution be re-examined and re-drafted, so as to establish this Unitary form of Government and thus effectively disprove the mischievous propaganda indulged in by the British and so unwittingly imbibed by the present leaders, about our being just a juxtaposition of so many distinct ethnic groups or nationalities happening to live side by side and grouped together by the accident of geographical contiguity and one uniform supreme foreign domination. Let us be grateful to the makers of the present Constitution as also to the worthy members of the S.R.C. for the services rendered but let us not allow the nation to become a house divided against itself and heading towards destruction by falling to pieces. Let our present leaders of the affairs of the state take courage in both hands, take a realistic view of things, envisage the dangers of disruption staring us in the face, face the misguided opposition of such ill-informed people as may happen to stoop to such opposition and,

with a firm hand, change the present ill-conceived federal structure to the only correct form of government, the unitary one.

Let Shankaracharya and Lincoln Inspire Present Leadership

With one sweep all talk of fragmenting the country will have been silenced, the rising tide of disunity, distrust and hostility put down, and conditions for a harmonious evolution of One Homogeneous People, One Nation, will have been established. There is no doubt that barring some vociferous elements the mass of the people will stand solidly behind such a scheme and our present leaders shall go down into futurity as the successful builders of Bharatiya national solidarity, will be worshipped by posterity as modern manifestation of a Shankaracharya, as Bharatiya parallels of an Abraham Lincoln.

The patriotism, and faith in the external Bharatiya Nation, of the leaders of our generation is being now put to the test. Whether they prove to be pure metal with a true ring, or mere tinsel, will be seen in the boldness they manifest and the steps they take now at this historic hour calling for all courage, determination and intense love for our ancient, but immortal nation. Let us pray to the Almighty, Who, in His wisdom, has always been guiding this Hindu Rashtra on the right path, the path of Dharma, that is the path holding the people together in one loving integrated unity, guide our leaders in this dark hour and inspire them with the right understanding and instil in them courage to tread along the right path for a glorious revival of our Great People.

19. The Eternal Basis

The work of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh had a very humble beginning. Steadily and gradually it has spread its work and today we find the Sangh branches working in full swing in all provinces of our country. This constant growth, this steady expansion has been an unfailing feature of the Sangh all through the trials and turmoils posed by the vagaries of the external situations.

The Urge for Growth

The Sangh met with its first major trial within fifteen years of its inception, in the sudden and unexpected death of its founder, Dr. Hedgewar. Needless to say, the Doctor was like the very life-breath of the organisation. He had watered the tiny plant of the Sangh with his sweat and blood. He had made of his life a burning lamp and it burned to the last drop of oil. Such an indispensable and incomparable leader had suddenly passed away. The organisation was yet in an infant stage. And many a well-wisher of the Sangh was struck with grave apprehensions about its future. But to the surprise of all, the Sangh grew with redoubled speed and vigour. Nor has its steady advance diminished after the quitting of the British. To some this appears to be a strange phenomenon. Puzzled, they ask us, "Now that the British have left and we have become free, where is the need for a separate organisation such as the Sangh? What role can it play now that we are free?"

Our answer is, mere external conditions such as political independence do not preclude the need for the organised state of society. In fact, it is only a well-knit and powerful society that can enjoy the fruits of a free, peaceful and prosperous life. Organised life is as much an effective weapon for a free nation to guard its

freedom as for an enslaved nation to shake off its fetters. An alert and organised nation alone can check internal corrosions and subversions, repel external aggressions and maintain its integrity and freedom intact.

Basic Approach

Doctorji had taken special pains to put forth this basic viewpoint right form the beginning of Sangh. This was, in fact, the way he approached every social problem. Once, while he was in Bombay, he was invited to visit an orphanage. After taking Doctorji round the institution the organisers there requested him to offer his suggestion with regard to their plans of expansion. Doctorji replied, "Well, instead of expanding such orphanages, would it not be far better to see that there are no orphans at all in our society? Social life should be such that no one shall feel helpless or forsaken. If some misfortune were to befall a person, his neighbour should spontaneously come forward to his help and rescue. This can be achieved only by building up social cohesion and harmony among the people, pulsating with mutual affinity and sympathy. If this is not done, social ills will continue to crop up one after another endlessly. If the blood-stream in the body is infected with germs, boils will erupt all over the body. If you treat and bandage them at one spot it will appear at another place. The basic remedy would be to purify the blood-stream itself. So also is the case with the body-politic of society.

Ideal Society as God

We look upon the society as the living manifestation of Almighty. And we have attributed to the Almighty the capacity of feeding all the living creatures under his care. He is therefore called Vishwambhara. There is a pauranic story, which I heard form a keertankar. Once, it seems, it occurred to Narada to test Lord Vishnu Himself. He caught hold of a few ants, shut them up in a

small box and kept it in his safe custody. Then he went out on his usual rounds singing the praise of Vishnu. After a while, he came to Lord Vishnu and casually enquired whether the Lord had had his food. Vishnu replied that he had done so after attending to the feeding of all the living creation. Narada then took out his box saying, "Well, these poor creatures seem to have escaped your Lords notice!" Vishnu appeared taken aback, apologised and requested Narada to open the box. And lo! When the box was opened, the ants came out each with a particle of sugar in its mouth!

Imaginary though the story may be, it beautifully depicts the state of an ideal society, which will take care of the needs of every living being under its shelter. In fact, the descriptions of our ancient society approximated to this state. No individual, however low and humble he may be, was left to suffer with hunger, thirst or want of shelter. The animals and birds near about also were cared for. Some had even taken a vow of feeding the ants before taking their food.

For an Abiding Basis

It is also well known that such an abiding, alert, positive and organised state of society cannot be based on mere antagonism to others. The reason for this is very simple. Movements which start as reactions to outside factors collapse to the ground no sooner the object of their antagonism is removed. There is also another important consideration. When the spirit of antagonism rules our mind, we have perforce to think constantly of those whom we oppose. And especially, we shall have to ruminate over their evil acts and evil qualities. Our shastras says that a man becomes what he thinks. It is the continuous thought-processes that go to form the mental texture and thus shape the personality of man. Any attempt at reorganisation of our society on the basis of hatred of the British or the Muslims would therefore be to court

degeneration and disaster. For, that would only pollute our minds by the constant remembering of their heinous crimes. Have we no positive, life-giving and sublime ideals at all to meditate upon and fashion our lives? Should we install a wicked aggressor in our hearts as a point of meditation?

It is true that sometimes we the Sangh workers too refer to incidents involving Muslims and the British. But that is only to draw attention to the lessons we have to learn from history, to show that we alone are responsible for our downfall. It was in fact the strange phenomenon of a small nation such as England ruling over a big country like ours form a distance of six thousand miles that made our revered founder, even as a boy of eight, to wonder and ponder over it. And it was after mature and deep contemplation regarding the root-cause of our slavery as also the right and positive approach to remove it, that Doctorji started the Sangh.

Effects of Reactionary Approach

But, somehow, most of our leaders fell a prey to sheer antagonism either to the British or to the Muslims, with the result that they have become either Anglicised or Muslimised. For example, some extremist Hindu bodies came into existence in our country to counteract the growing violence and depredations of Muslims and to put a check to their appeasement in the political field. They recounted again and again the harrowing tales of the blood-curdling massacres, forcible conversions, raping of women, desecration of temples and all such atrocities perpetrated by the Muslims ever since they stepped on this soil.

There is a revealing incident, which I came across during anti-cow-slaughter campaign. I met a Hindu leader of great repute and scholarship known for his fiery patriotism. During our talk he causally asked "What harm is there if a Hindu takes to beef?" I

was simply stunned to hear such words from that person, whom I hold in great respect. What must have been the reason for such an utterance, which even the most depraved Hindu would shudder to think of? The reason is, the continuous thinking about the Muslims and their vices had left their deep impress upon his mind and made him culturally a Muslim, though he remained politically a Hindu.

It is this atmosphere of reactionary mentality that makes people view the Sangh also in the same light. Once we had gone to a place to start our work. The gentlemen of the town confronted us with the question, "Well, where is the need for Sangh in our town? There are no Muslims here." I replied, We have come here to organise Hindus and not Muslims. I hope you are all Hindus. How are we concerned whether Muslims reside here or not?"

Sign of Living Society

It is on this reactionary background that people say that there is now a change in circumstances, that since the British have left this country there is no need for an organisation of this type. We, on the other hand, view the problem differently. We say, the Hindus were here and they continue to be here. They were disunited and are still disunited. We see the same disintegrated, mute Hindu Society letting itself to be trampled upon without a murmur of protest. And when it does speak, it is with so many voices that what it says sounds like gibberish. As such, we see absolutely no change in the situation. Suppose there is a man suffering from typhoid during an epidemic. Will the doctor treating that patient lose the incentive when the health officer of the town declares that the epidemic had ended? Similarly, do we not see the malady of disunity still scouring the body of this ancient and great society? How then can we afford to stop administering the proper medicine?

Our duty, therefore, to make our society united, organised and mighty is as much before us today as at any time before. It is our dharma to see that our society, our great mother, is made powerful, great, and happy. It is this innate love and adoration for our people, this positive faith in our national being that has been the constant urge for all our actions. True love of that type is not dependent upon external situations. Nor is it born out of them. It takes its roots deep in our hearts reminding us of the duty towards our nation every moment of our life. It makes us conscious that we belong to this great and sacred motherland that we owe a deep debt of gratitude to her and that every action of ours must be our offering in her cause.

Hinduism, which has been our sheet-anchor, fosters this pure and all-embracing love, free from any spirit of reaction. We of the Sangh, who have been born and bred in that heritage, only act. We do not react. In fact, it is the nature of the insignificant and material things to react strongly towards momentary heat and cold. But healthy living human beings are not overcome by vagaries of weather. They maintain a steady temperature of their own which even the extreme variations of weather cannot disturb. In fact, they fall down lifeless whenever their bodies no longer maintain that normal temperature. It is therefore that we have been constantly keeping before our minds eye the vision of an organised society, which would not stray from its chartered course because of changes in external circumstances.

Realising the Vision in Practice

It is because the Sangh is firmly founded on this unreactionary, positive and abiding faith in our own national being, that it is calmly and steadily growing form strength to strength undisturbed by fleeting changes in the external conditions. It is this vision of an everlasting, powerful and glorious condition of an organised social life that constantly inspires a Swayamsevak to take to the

work of Sangh as his life-mission devoid of all traces of selfishness. In fact the Swayamsevak experiences the thrill of joy and inspiration in the day-to-day work of the Sangh, where he sees the vision of his dreams realised in actuality, though on a miniature scale. He is spurred on to greater effort to fulfil the mission.

This is the unique feature of Sangh work, wherein the means and the end have coalesced. The end i.e., the ideal of a reorganised society, is being gradually realised in practice by the means, the day-to-day process of bringing together and moulding persons for an organised life. This is in true conformity with the teachings of our philosophy in respect of devotees. To a devotee, devotion is both the end and the means - swayam phalaroopata. Similarly, the work of our organisation born out of intense devotion to our society is self-inspiring. It is this perfect concentration on its chosen path born out of a thorough grasp of the principles forming the grass-roots of an eternally powerful and self-sustaining national life that has made this organisation invincible and ever-expanding.

An Opposite Instance

Let us take an example of the opposite type, which may help us to appreciate this point better. It is of an organisation, which had kept before itself a temporary objective. The Indian National Congress, the oldest political body in our country today, had kept before itself the aim of driving out the British. Now that the British have gone form this land, the aim of Congress has been fulfilled. It was precisely for this reason that Mahatma Gandhi, who was the mainstay of that organisation for about twenty-five years and had a thorough insight into its working, advised its disbandment soon after the British left. But, as we know, man develops attachment to name and form. And so, most of his followers could not relish the idea of disbanding Congress.

Probably the taste of political power also must have added its share to their sticking to that name and form even by flouting the express will of their master.

The result is, that Congress, having nothing positive to fulfil has rapidly drifted and degenerated from all the ideals it professed during its struggle against the British. The principles of truth, non-violence, character, patriotism have all vanished into thin air. Although the motto remains the same, its content has totally disappeared.

Falsehood struts about masquerading as truth. The Government had been aware, on their won admission, of the Chinese aggression on our northern frontiers since 1954. But they suppressed the truth, denied it, derided those who spoke of it and continued to paint before the country the rosy picture of Hindi Chini Bhai Bhai. Could falsehood go further?

So far as non-violence is concerned, of course, our leaders preach peace and non-violence to the whole world, but within our own country there has been more violence done to our countrymen in the form of arrests, lathi-charges and shootings on those whom they consider as their political opponents then even during the days of British domination. And as for violence in speech, there appears to be no limit to it. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru once publicly appealed to all political leaders in the country to be restrained in their criticisms. And it was he who condemned those differed from his political views as gaddar i.e., traitors!

Decadence in character has become the order of the day. Corruption and nepotism have become rampant. A separate department has been started to check corruption in various departments. But it is found that another department is required to check corruption in that anti-corruption department itself? It will thus go on ad infinitum. An acquaintance of mine who was once a

leading Congress worker came to see me. He bewailed the serious loss to the Exchequer occasioned by the maintenance of so many departments to check black-marketing, smuggling, corruption and so on. He suggested that the Sangh should take up the task of purifying all such persons responsible for these evils. I told him, "I welcome your suggestion. But you will enlighten me form whom I should begin?" He understood what I meant because he knew very well that this corrosion had entered the marrows of even the topmost men.

The New Craze

When we come to the present-day plight of the lofty ideas of patriotism and self-sacrifice, which spurred our leaders to action during the anti-British movements, we see that their meanings have all changed. The unity of the motherland is no more a living concept for them. Eminent leaders have begun to bless and encourage movements intended to break up the country. Sri C. Rajagopalachari has stated (during 1965) that he would prefer partition of the country to what he calls imposition of Hindi (in Tamil Nadu). The idea of sacrifice has been replaced by one of cashing on past sacrifices. Everywhere there is a craze for show of sacrifice rather than its real essence. It is like the story of a pandit who had gone to perform Satyanarayan Pooja. He stealthily knocked off a Valuable jewel during the pooja but came back all the way to return a small piece of thread to that house and duly impressed the members of the household with his high sense of honesty

This craze for show devoid of the true spirit of sacrifice has made all our big plans a mockery. The desire for name and fame passes off as service. To give a funny instance, some years ago there were floods in the river Ganga inundating parts of Kashi. One of the ministers who happened to be there at the time thought of paying a visit to the affected areas. He went in a car up to the

edge of the flood waters. There he stopped and asked his secretary where the cameraman was. But somehow that important point had been forgotten. The car was sent back to bring the professional photographer. It was only after he came and had taken a couple of photographs of the minister standing in knee-deep water in the act of flood relief work that all of them returned merrily in the car with the satisfaction of having done their best for the flood victims!

The Shifting Loyalties

Those persons who once spoke of dedication in the cause of the nation are now chasing the shadow of their own glorification. Self-conceit has taken the place of self-surrender. Their thoughts, words and deeds have all become egocentric. Some years ago, when Pandit Nehru visited the Naga Hills, some people wanted to present him with a memorandum in the public meeting demanding a separate independent Naga State. But the local authorities did not allow it. As a protest, about three thousand Nagas rose in a body and left the meeting when Pandit Nehru was about to address them. Pandit Nehru took it as a personal affront and began to say that the foreign Christian missions in this country were playing a dirty anti-national game and so on. Till then he used to go about praising their humanitarian activities and even proclaiming that it was a great honour done to country when some local bishop was made a cardinal!

Having lost the supreme and dominant note of selfless devotion to the nation as a whole, smaller and lower objects have come to occupy its place in our heart. Discordant notes of attachment to a party, to a language, to a province, to a caste or sect have torn our national life to shreds. And the tragedy is that it is the top-ranking leaders who take the lead in all such disruptive tactics to serve their own ends. The experts committee which was formed to prepare the Second Five Year Plan exposed the real motive

behind that plan saying that they were in a way forced to draft the plan in that fashion as against * during 1965 ** on Tamil Nadu their considered views because of the political pressure brought upon them.

Drifting and Drifting

This is how our people are drifting under tall talk of progress. We do not know where we are going. Is there today anything that can be pointed out as the essence of our own national life? Our way of life, our method of education, our mode of behaviour, our way of dress, our way of building houses, towns and cities and all such elements of our national ethos have undergone such an awful change that we do not stop for a moment to consider whether this abject imitation of others is not a humiliation of our national pride, a sure sign of losing our national identity and drifting into intellectual slavery.

For example, our leaders have set up a new flag for our country. Why did they do so? It is just a case of drifting and imitating. How did this flag come into being? During the French Revolution, the French put up three stripes on their flag to express the triple ideas of equality, fraternity and liberty. The American Revolution inspired by similar principles took it up with some changes. Three stripes therefore held a sort of fascination for our freedom fighters also. So, it was taken up by the Congress. Then it was interpreted as depicting the unity of the various communities-the saffron colour standing for the Hindu, the green for the Muslim and the white for all the other communities. Out of the non-Hindu communities the Muslim was specially named because in the minds of most of those eminent leaders the Muslim was dominant and without naming him they did not think that our nationality could be complete! When some persons pointed out that this smacked of a communal approach, a fresh, explanation was brought forward that he saffron stood for sacrifice, the white

for purity and the green for peace and so on. All these interpretations were discussed in the Congress Committees during those days. Who can say that this is a pure and healthy national outlook? It was just a politicians patchwork, just political expediency. It was not inspired by any national vision or truth based on our national history and heritage. The same flag has been taken up today as our State Flag with only a glorious past. Then, had we no flag of our own? Had we no national emblem at all these thousands of years? Undoubtedly, we had. Then, why this void, this utter vacuum in our minds?

We also see so many slogans being coined on the eve of every election or even every year, slogans culled form foreign theories, which had already been long ago exploded. They say, we are now fighting for Socialistic doctrine! There is now so much conformity to the word of the leader and so much servility to European ideas that even the little Congress worker goes about re-echoing the same words Socialism, Socialistic pattern of society, Democratic Socialism and all such things to the extent of claiming that this had been the settled policy of Congress right from 1885!

At times we drift towards America and at times towards Russia. Where is all this going to lead us except to moral and intellectual annihilation? Why are we drifting? Because we are not standing upon our own legs. Those who have lost their own pedestal needs must drift. A tree, which has been uprooted and caught in a flood is driven hither and thither by every current of water. Our entire national life has been uprooted and therefore there is no other go but to drift. And drifting always means going form a higher level to a lower level, ultimately sinking into a bottomless abyss. That is the unfortunate condition in which we find ourselves today.

Lesson of History

To prevent this drifting, there is only one remedy. And that is, to reawaken in ourselves the consciousness that we have our own positive foundations, that we have our own roots penetrating deep into the soil of our national ideals and aspirations, history and heritage. It is only a positive and dynamic build-up of an organisation of the type of the Sangh, capable of embracing all of our people in a loving and eternal brotherhood and making them intensely conscious of their national destiny that can effectively check the present rot of selfishness, dissensions and vulgar imitations born out of drifting.

So we can truly say that the necessity of the Sangh can be felt much more keenly today than when it was first started. The present-day conditions do not admit of any sense of complacency. The circumstances inside and outside the country are explosive. We have heard that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. Let us, at least now, take a lesson form our history. Prithviraj, who could put to rout the hordes of Mohammed Ghori several times before, was defeated when he gave himself up to enjoyment in the company of his newly wedded wife Samyogita at a time when the enemy was pounding at the gates of Delhi.

The Red Signal

Can we honestly say that our nation is so strong-willed and well-organised that we can confidently face all dangers to our free and prosperous existence? Do we, for instance, see the glow of manliness and idealism in the eyes of our youth? Do we not, on the other hand, see our youth, chasing vulgar shadows of foreign fashions and wallowing in pleasures of the senses? I had once an occasion to visit a physical training camp conducted by the Congress. Boys and girls were both participating in the activities. I asked the organiser of the camp whether it would not have been better if girls had not been allowed there. He frankly confessed that in that case very few young men would have come! There

was a Youth conference organised at Lucknow. Having heard the first hand report of that Conference form our friends there, I felt that it was not a conference having any educative value but only an unholy center for spreading horrible immorality.

No nation can hope to survive with its young men given over to sensuality and effeminacy. That is the surest sign of decay and destruction, howsoever prosperous and mighty the nation may be for the time being. An American correspondent had once come to meet me to know which way the sympathies of our Sangh lie in the present tug of war between America and Russia. But we stand firm on our own feet and do not allow ourselves to be dragged either way. He asked me, "What is your opinion about the present-day America?" I replied, "America is moving fast on the road to self-destruction. Just see your own clothes. The loose fashionable garments that you wear and the comb in your pocket betray the effeminate nature of the average American today. In the First World War, the Generalissimo of the Allied Forces was Marshal Foch, a Frenchman. Such was the heroic state of that nation at that time that they fought the Germans with grim resolve and won the war ultimately. They even pocketed a sizable portion of Germany. But after the victory, Frenchmen succumbed to sensuality and enjoyment. They lost themselves in drinking, singing and dancing with the result that in spite of their huge military machine and their formidable Maginot line, France collapsed within fifteen days of the German onslaught during the Second World War. The sudden and total collapse of France was due to effeminacy which had sapped the energy of the heroic manhood of France. After the war, Marshal Petain, the old French general, stated that France was defeated not on the battle-fields but in the ball-rooms of Paris. I sincerely hope that America will wake up in time and stop this internal corrosion of its young manhood."

In our country also the conditions are not different. The modern fashion of young men is to appear more and more feminine. In dress, in habits, in literature and in every aspect of our day-to-day life modernism has come to mean effeminacy. Sex has become the one dominating theme of all our modern literature. History of countries the world over has time and again shown that sex-dominated literature has been an unfailing precursor to the ruin of nations and civilisations.

This, in short, is the internal picture of our national life under freedom. It is a red signal, which we can ignore only at our peril. Under these conditions, it is only an organisation such as the Sangh dedicated to forge our people into a pure, holy, benevolent and organised life, breathing the spirit of sacrifice and heroism, and based on the positive and abiding foundation of our ancient and glorious nationhood, that can be relied upon to protect and rejuvenate our nation. And it is the call of this yet unfulfilled mission that is the motive force behind the ever-growing and ever-expanding work of the *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh*.

20. Nourish The Roots

It goes without saying that the teachers are the key figures in the field of education. It is but proper that we briefly touch upon a few fundamentals in this context.

Our Basic Concept

To start with, what does education connote in the modern sense of the term? It is to draw out the latent faculties in man. Merely stuffing pieces of information into the brain is not education. Making mans brain a lumber room is not its aim. Recognising and bringing out the diverse talents and genius in man has been taken to be the cornerstone of education everywhere. And this has yielded substantial results too. We can find men of great achievements in several fields of arts and sciences in various countries.

But, we the Hindus have gone further. With us, the bringing out or the manifestation of the Inner Personality of man, is the essence of education. Life is not a mere bundle of passions. We say, there is an Ultimate Reality within us. To realise and manifest that Supreme Reality is the basic aim of our system of education. Our great sages and tapasvis have given detailed instructions with regard to the procedures to do that. And the teacher has a vital role in executing them.

Tap the Reservoir

To start with, he has to inculcate in the students the ten principles of Yama and Niyama. Ahimsa (non-injury), Satya (truthfulness), Asteya (non-coveting), Brahmacharya (continence) and Aparigraha (non-acquisition) form the five Yamas. Shoucha (purity), Santosha (contentment), Tapah (penance), Swadhyaya

(spiritual study), and Ishwara Pranidhana (offering of ones actions to God) form the five Niyama. Even if a small number of students in a school imbibe the spirit of Yamas and Niyamas, they will be able to spread a healthy atmosphere so that others also will follow them in course of time.

These principles need to be told to the young minds in an interesting way. When I was in the middle school we had a teacher. Apart from his school teaching, he used to tell us various stories from our ancient puranas in a very interesting and instructive style. I was able to learn a lot from my mother also. My mother was not an educated woman. I used to read out for her from our religious literature, like Mahabharata and Ramayana. Thereby I myself have immensely benefited.

It is such stories that have been, over centuries, building up our tradition and character as a people. There is a lot to learn from them. For example, there is the story of Jabali. Here is a boy who adhered to truth under all circumstances. When he approached a teacher with a request to be accepted as his pupils the teacher asked him to what gotra he belonged. The boy went home and repeated the teachers query to his mother Jabala. She said, "Well, I conceived you when I was serving as a maid servant in a masters house. I do not recollect who your father is. Tell this to your teacher." The boy went back and recounted his mothers reply word to word to the teacher. The teacher said to him, " You are the right type to receive education. You have the rectitude of character and the courage to tell the truth." Thereafter the boy came to be known as Satyakama Jabala.

Purge Perversions

But today most of us are oblivious of that wealth of anecdotes and allusions. Most of our young men do not even know that we have an ancient history, rich with excellences in all fields of life. In the

absence of this positive and healthy content in education it is no wonder that our students take to reading vulgar and obscene magazines. Their methods of studying subjects also betray a lack of serious effort and the will to understand. Study of text-books and reference books by standard authors is given a go-by. Short-Notes and Questions and Answers have become the fashion of the day. Private tuition appears to the students to be another such easy way to pass. A teacher should, in fact, feel it an insult to his calibre and devotion to duty if his students are required to take tuition from others. The effect of all such short-cuts on the students minds has been ruining of his initiative, will and ability to understand. It is also often found that the teachers too encourage such things. Some teachers actually goad their students to come to them for private tuition. This will affect the students morale. An impression will be created in their minds that one need not do ones duty honestly and could find some other crooked avenues for earning. It is this loss of moral integrity that makes students take to immoral means to get through the examination when all other short-cuts fail.

Be Hindus to the Core

All these perversions have to be nipped in the bud and the great qualities of head and heart planted in the young minds right from the elementary school stage. This can be done only when we draw upon the limitless storehouse of our ancient as well as modern literature which depicts our sublime national ethos and our mighty national heroes and events. Especially, our young men must be made to feel proud of being born in the great lineage of Rishis and Yogis. If we have to live up to their legacy, we must live as Hindus, we must appear as Hindus and also we must make ourselves felt by the whole world as Hindus. It is only when we learn to respect ourselves, our national customs and manners that we can hope to command respect from the outside world also. In

fact the world wants us to be true to ourselves and not to become mere carbon copies of some X,Y or Z.

Be True to Self

Once a Frenchman came to me. He was invited for food. He gladly sat on the floor and took our food just like us with fingers “ no spoon, no fork, no tables. He said that he relished it all the more, and remarked: "When we come to you we must know and experience your ways and specialities of behaviour and customs. Otherwise where is the fun in our coming all the way to your country?

Once the Akhila Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishat, a student organisation, had taken up a project to bring some students form NEFA and give them education in Poona and some other places in Maharashtra. The plan was to accommodate them in homes so that they could imbibe our culture and feel emotionally attached to our motherland and our people. When the organisers of the project came to me, I advised them not to lodge those students in westernised homes. They must reside in homes where the light is lit before the deity every morning and evening, where our festivals and customs are very much alive, and where they can imbibe our cultural norms. It is through such samskars that our vast concourse of people spreading over vast regions of this land have maintained their identity as a single national entity amidst all the turmoils and have lived as an immortal nation.

The Edinburgh Review wrote as far back as 1872 that the Hindu is the most ancient nation on the earth and has been unsurpassed in refinement and culture. But unfortunately, the children of such an ancient and great race themselves have fallen a prey to foreign propaganda and forgotten their ancient history and heritage. Such a society with its roots pulled out form its past can never hope to build a bright future for itself.

Main Hurdle

Once, during one of my visits to Delhi, I happened to meet Sri M.C. Chagla. He was then the Minister of Education at the Centre. He had just returned from a visit to Russia. He narrated his impression of how the youth there appeared to be serious in their studies and imbued with great ambitions of establishing their supremacy in all fields of life. He then asked me, " Well, I have not been able to understand what is wrong with our youth, why our students are given to strikes, indiscipline and disorder. But I find that in your organisation the young men are disciplined and dedicated. So, could you suggest some remedy for our youth problem?"

I asked him, "Well, have you placed any great ideal before the students?" He replied, "I must confess, no!" I then said, " Without a noble ideal to inspire them, how can we expect our students to imbibe discipline and dedication to higher values in life? It is such high idealism that can make them restrain their wild impulses, and direct their bubbling energies into constructive, nation-building channels. And inculcation of national idealism should have to start with the teaching of our true history in schools and colleges. Our children will have to be taught that they are born in a land of great heritage, that their forebears had set up the highest standards in material as well as spiritual achievements. Then only they too will be enthused to strive to attain the same or even greater heights.

"However, in our schools we teach the very opposite. The most glorious period of our history is denoted as dark ages; periods of slavery are glorified. The exploits of aggressors are eulogised and not the inspiring role of our freedom fighters. Our history is for the most part occupied by the Muslim period and, later, the British period. If this is how we teach our children “ that they had nothing great in the past, that they have been a beaten people

always, that it was only after the advent of Moghuls and, later the English, that this nation began to look forward “ in short, that they had no past worthy of pride and no ancestors worthy of emulation, can we expect anything worth while from them?

"However, if you were to speak in glowing terms of the achievements of the Hindus in the past, and of their heroism and self-sacrificing zeal in their struggle against the foreigners “ whether they were Greek, Muslim or English “ you will be immediately branded as "communal"! Therein lies the hitch, the real crux of the problem!" Sri Chagla fell silent for a minute and confessed that it was so.

The Contrast

And what has been the outcome of this self-humiliating and stultifying type of education? Some years ago, one Dr. Chaturvedi was to visit Germany. There was an Indo-German Association, which sent him an invitation. As soon as he got down at the airport dressed like a European the people were taken aback. But they consoled themselves with the thought that it might be to protect himself against the cold. They took him through decorated streets, with four main arches named after the four Vedas, in which he was supposed to be proficient. For he was a "Chaturvedi"! A young lady, the secretary of the Association spoke in chaste Samskrit welcoming him. There was one more speech “ that too in Samskrit. In reply, the learned Doctor spoke in English on a subject, which had no relevance whatsoever to the welcome speech! The simple reason was, he did not know a word of Smaskrit, let alone the Vedas. The cat was out of the bag. All further programmes were cancelled and the learned Doctor was unceremoniously asked to fly back by the next plane.

In contrast, see how our great ones have behaved. When Swami Ramatirtha reached the shores of America, the co-passengers

were all in a hurry to take out their luggage and depart. However, the saffron-clad sannyasi sat tranquil and unperturbed, enjoying the scenery all round. An American gentleman who happened to be at the port accosted him and enquired where he wanted to go, where his luggage was, whether he had any introductory letter and so on. Ramatirtha replied that he carried no luggage, no money and, much less, any introductory letter. The American, dumbstruck, asked, "How then do you manage to carry on in this foreign country? Is there no friend, no one of your acquaintance here?" To this Ramatirtha just smiled and, placing his hands affectionately on the shoulders of that American, said, "Of course, I have one, and that is yourself!" At this, the American gentleman felt deeply touched, and in truth became his ardent friend and admirer and made excellent arrangements for the Swamis sojourn in America.

Forget Not the Base

But such depths of love and wisdom can be touched only if we start getting the necessary training right form our infancy. For that, the right type of atmosphere has to be created from the elementary school stage itself. Once I went to a school in Nasik. Hundreds of pictures were put up on the walls of the corridor. But all of them were scenes depicting battles and such other things form Europe and elsewhere. Not one was from our history or our epics. I asked the Headmaster how these pictures could inculcate the right spirit in our younger generation.

Why not have the pictures of the battle of Haldighat, of Panipat, etc.? To that he remarked that one should not have a narrow outlook limiting ones horizon to the boundaries of ones own country. Such perverted notions of internationalism and similar other high platitudes will only play havoc on our young minds.

Without the firm base of nationalism, to speak of humanity and internationalism would be losing at both ends. And so far as our national philosophy and heritage is concerned it has always embraced within its fold the highest good of all humanity. As such, preaching of our nationalism, even in its most intense form, will never divert the minds of our children form the highest values of human welfare. On the contrary, it only strengthens these human values.

These are some of the broad hints which the teachers, as mouldres of young minds, may usefully keep in mind.

21. The One Answer to Many Challenges

The work of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh has been started with the one aim of building up an organised and consolidated life of our Hindu People. It is indeed a difficult and an uphill task. In order to achieve this goal, we have to first find out what are the obstacles and the problems, which we have to face on the way.

Why Fight Shy?

The first thing that strikes our eyes is, that many of our Hindu brethren, even the educated and well meaning among them, feel shy to call themselves Hindus. Some specious arguments are advanced to support their view that they need not call themselves Hindus. I remember someone quoting Swami Vivekananda and saying that he spoke of universal religion in order to usher in socialism and secularism! But the fact is that one can come across innumerable passages in his works wherein he exhorts us to stand up with pride and hold our heads high as Hindus. He has called upon us to proclaim at the top to our voice: I am a Hindu. Mahayogi Aurobindo has said the Sanatana Dharma is the essence of Hindu Rashtra. So we find that the present mental complex of fighting shy of calling ourselves Hindus goes against the saying of these great seers and thinkers.

A Myth Exploded

Secondly, we find that our Hindu society has been broken into so many bits and fragments. The countless divisions of castes, sects, creeds and languages, present a dismal picture of total disintegration.

About twenty years ago, it was thought that language was a great cementing force, but now that theory is exploded. People with same language now want to go apart and carve out for themselves distinct political units called States. The present upsurge for a separate Telangana in Andhara is also of the same nature.

Since the day Andhara Pradesh was formed, the complaint began gaining ground in the Telengana region that the coastal Andhra people were monopolising all services and economic opportunities and that the sons of the soil were being thrown out. Now, what does this expression sons of the soil denote? It only means that our people have begun to feel that they are the children of a small region and not of the whole country. If this were to continue then each district will become a centre of *The last public address at Bangalore “ February 1973. - loyalty! At present, the Telugu-speaking people are waging a sort of war with the Centre for the breaking up of the present State into two or probably three portions. The belief that linguistic entity would be a homogeneous one in now belied.

Only Way Out

The only way out is to be courageous enough to declare a unitary type of Government by suitably amending the Constitution. The country is one, the people are one, and therefore let us have only a single Government, a single Legislative Authority. The country may be arranged into various zones from the point of view of administrative convenience. The zones may be few or many, that doesnt matter.

The executive authority may be distributed, but the legislative authority should be one. There are some who say that many provinces and provincial legislatures are necessary to satisfy the demands of democracy. I have not been able to understand what connection there is between democracy and having many

legislatures. One Central Legislature for the whole of the country should satisfy the demands of democracy.

The Lesser Evil

However, as things are, the persons at the helm of affairs seem unable to muster courage to opt for the Unitary State. Then, if the present federal structure has to continue, it is essential that definite principles must be formulated by all and they must be struck to.

If there are smaller units, with language as only one of the basic factors and not as the sole deciding criterion, then that should be welcome. States with more than one language in each, or more than one state with the same language, may be formed keeping in view the overall national interests. Smaller units need not be always harmful.

Beware of This Dangerous Precedent

As a matter of fact, tiny states have been formed in the old province of Assam where it is positively harmful. The British had kept the so-called NEFA separate form the rest of Assam. The same tradition is being carried forward by our Government also. Now NEFA has been given a different name so that its separate entity has been confirmed. Apart form that, under pressure or what I do not know, a small state called Meghalaya round about Shillong, and another, Mizoram, have been formed. These are economically bankrupt; in fact, they cannot help being bankrupt, so small is their population. Breaking up of that province into so many parts has in a way weakened our position in that border area which had been the seat of trouble from China since 1962.

The Painful Spectacle

What a painful spectacle these agitations and violent demonstrations in one name or the other, present! And what a great havoc is being wrought by the various forces of disruption! The idea of belonging to one single country seems to have been entirely lost sight of. There is a widespread feeling that people in the South have nothing common with those in the North. Rudyard Kipling wrote, "East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet." However, now, East and West are meeting on cultural and scientific grounds. But in our own country, where we have all along been one people for thousands of years, to say that North is North, South is South and never can they meet-how extremely unfortunate it is!

The Multi-Faced Crisis

Added to these forces of disruption, is the corroding evil of corruption rampant everywhere. There is a crisis of character. Everyone knows this, everyone speaks of it. In fact talk about corruption is so widespread that our sensitivity to it seems to have become dulled. Even when we see it, we dont feel revulsion at it; our conscience is not roused.

When a country falls low in character its very existence as an honourable and free nation is imperilled. We see such conditions existing in our country today. Some of our leaders at the top have said that the American secret agency “ CIA “ is active in our country, trying to disrupt our national life. Suppose it is. How can such agencies “ whether of America or Russia “ act unless some of our own citizens play into their hands? Either they must be on their payroll or under their influence in one way or the other.

A Sweet Poison

Praise is also one such way of influencing. And there are subtle ways of praise too. Recently news appeared in papers that a certain institute of town planners and architects in France pronounced that Chandigarh was the best city in the whole of the world. I think they had given it a certificate of honour also. If they had said only that much, we would have had no objection. Because, after all, Chandigarh has been planned by French architects and town planners, and if they think that it is the best town planned, it is quite natural. But in the same breath it has been said that it was all due to the foresight and the dynamic personality of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, which qualities are now being manifested in his daughter, the present Prime Minsiter. What a fine, sweet way of flattery! Let us hope that our Prime Minister will refuse to be flattered. That will be in keeping with our great tradition, of not falling a prey to praise or flattery, and keeping on a strong and balanced mind.

We do not know how many more ways of flattery are being practised upon our people by others! After all, human mind is weak and if persons in high authority succumb to it, harm is bound to befall us. We should bear in mind that succumbing to flattery is also lack of character.

Can There be Still Lower Depths?

The painful experience that we have come across during the famine relief measures in several parts of the country at different times is a glaring example of the low depths of character to which we have sunk. Whatever help the Government or the other agencies mobilise for the sake of the famine-stricken people, does not always reach them. The middle-men swallow up a substantial part. Last year, much help came from foreign countries also for the refugees from East Bengal in the form of drugs, woollen rugs and blankets. But most of them did not reach the refugees at all. They were sold in the markers of Culcutta. However, the

authorities have not tried to catch hold of those who had indulged in such nefarious business and had enriched themselves at the cost of their suffering brethren. If a probe had been undertaken, probably some of the secrets of our corrupt political life would have come to light. To what a low condition have we degraded ourselves, that when some are dying for want of food, others should be fattening themselves at their cost! With such a corrupt people no nation can ever hope to rise. This is the great challenge “ the challenge of Crisis of Character.

Old Problem Renewed

Now, an old problem has once again raised its head.

During the freedom struggle, as we know, persons professing a faith not born out of the Hindu family of faiths, objected to the singing of Vande Mataram, the song which inspired our freedom-fighters to sacrifice their all in the cause of national liberation. As a result, this beautiful song was mutilated by our own leaders, and only the first few lines were allowed to be sung. Even now, the same thing continues except in the meetings conducted by such persons as are wholly devoted to the Motherland as the very manifestation of the Divine Mother. Recently, a few Muslim gentlemen, some of them belonging to the ruling party also, have objected to the singing of the present fraction of Vande Mataram in the Urdu Schools of Bombay Corporation. All these years, schools teaching in any language, Urdu, Hindi, Marathi, or Gujarati, have been singing this song.

A Suicidal Support

There was a report that the General Secretary of the Ruling Congress has also supported this objection of the Muslims. If the report is true, and the powers that be give a directive that the singing of Vande Mataram will be optional, then it will be a

willful attempt at suppressing patriotic feelings among the people. Such suppression is bound to harm the country. If the episode is allowed to pass off without taking a serious view of it, we can be sure that throughout the country impetus will be given to the communal feeling on the part of the non-Hindus.

In the present incident, unfortunately, no leader at the Centre has come forward to condemn the opposition to Vande Mataram. Not even those who are now trying to reform the Muslim society have come out with an unequivocal statement to that effect. I think that all the political parties, including the ruling party, should take a strong stand and declare that those who refuse to sing Vande Mataram shall have no place in the party. That will help creating an atmosphere of mother and child relationship between our country and all the communities living here.

Manifest the Inherent

As the present conditions stand, it is clear that it is only the Hindu who feels that this country is his adored Motherland. This feeling is in his blood. For generations, he has been worshipping the dust of this sacred soil. Whatever auspicious work he takes in hand, he starts with Bhoomi Poojana. This ingrained devotion in us has to be made alive once again and the entire Hindu People made to feel that they are the children of the same soil and, as such, are brothers to one another.

We are nowadays trying to establish fraternal relations with all sorts of people in the world " the Russians, Chinese, Japanese, Arabs, the Americans and whom not " but within ourselves we are engaged in fratricidal conflict! This is a very incongruous situation, which must be corrected. We must learn once again the lesson that from North to South and East to West, to whatever sect, caste or language we may belong, we are one single brotherhood, the children of the same Mother, with the same

blood coursing through our veins. The integrated oneness of our people can manifest only as a result of this realisation. Mere economic or political adjustments here and there, some patchwork theories wont be able to create such abiding oneness.

Evidence of the High

There are some persons in our country who say that all ancient things like our heritage, traditions, etc., are anachronisms in the present times and must be thrown into the dustbin of oblivion. But even they, when circumstance force them, cannot help singing the glory of our past. When there was war on the issue of Bangladesh, our Prime Minister " socialistic, secular etc., as she calls herself, and others also like to call her " could not but say that we have a glorious heritage of five thousand years and that we are not going to be brow-beaten by anyone. I was particularly happy that the Prime Minister voiced the sentiments propagated by the RSS all these years, as if she were also one of its members!

Cost of Denial of Truth

This idea that the Hindu People are the Rashtra here is a historical truth. To deny truth is not going to do us any good in this world. However, this truth has been sought to be denied for the past so many decades in a vain bid to bring the various non-Hindu communities into the mainstream of national life. Not only that but even the expression of that truth is made out to be against our countrys interests. One fails to understand how the expression of truth can be against the national interest.

Truth is truth. It must be spoken, expressed and experienced; it must be lived up to. Unless we do this, real national integration of the people as a whole, even among the Hindus, will never be realised. As a matter of fact, even such Muslims and Christians who are really well-meaning and patriotic at heart and are not

ridden by old dreams of their empires, do accept that this has been Hindu land for thousands of years and its national ethos is the Hindu ethos. They are also aware that this national ethos in no way militates against their individual religions. But unfortunately, such persons are very few and are also not vocal. Probably they are not listened to by their co-religionists.

Responsibility is Ours

If once all the Hindus, whatever their political and other denominations, decide to stand shoulder to shoulder in a concerted manner as one national entity right form the Himalayas to Kanyakumari and form Dwaraka to Manipur, then all those others who have been living in this country will also learn to respect the Mother and the national entity here. Keeping their own faiths intact they will be able to become useful members of this great nation.

Hence the RSS has been emphasising that the revitalization of the truth of our national existence alone will be able to inspire our people for unified and dedicated efforts in the cause of the nation. That alone will make our nation march forward with strength and confidence holding its head high amidst all the turmoils and conflicts surrounding us in the world.

22. The Elixir of National Life

World of Reality

We, the children of this great and ancient nation, naturally desire that our nation should scale ever new heights of prosperity, glory and honour in this world. This is a very legitimate desire, no one can deny it. However, life is not all smooth-sailing in this world of hard reality. Even in the fulfilment of just and legitimate desire one is confronted with impediments and challenges from outside forces. If we have to bring to life the dream of our national glory, we have to assess and analyse the nature of this challenge and prepare ourselves to meet it effectively.

The Great Fact

The world, as it obtains today, is divided into groups of human beings called nations, which are constantly competing with one another for greater power and prosperity and greater domination over wider territories of the globe. This has been the unfailing feature of human history right from its beginning. In all these millennia the slogans have changed, but not this basic fact. The mask has changed, but not the spirit.

In earlier days, it was imperialism in its unabashed naked form trying to spread its political tentacles over others. Today, the spirit of domination has taken on many more garbs, more alluring and more dangerous. They are sometimes economic and sometimes ideological. But the spirit of world domination is there strong as ever. When one nation wants to dominate over another, a conflict is inevitable. Thus we find in this wide world that there is never any real peace. In fact it is always in a state of intermittent strife. And peace is only an interval between two wars. Conflict is in the very nature of mankind as it is constituted today.

Even so great a person as Sri Krishna, who left no stone unturned to avoid an internecine war and to bring about a just and peaceful settlement between the Pandavas and Kauravas, failed in his mission. War became inevitable and Sri Krishna tells Arjuna;

"Kaalosmi lokakshayakrut pravruddho
Lokaansamaahartumiha pravruttah
Rutepi tvaam na bhavishyanti sarve
Yevasthitah pratyaneekeshu yodhaah"

(*I am the Power of destruction, come to slay these men here. Even without thee all the warriors, standing arrayed in hostile ranks, shall be destroyed.*) It only means that death and destruction are in the very nature of this world. This is the great fact of human life to which it is no use shutting our eyes.

Conflicts are going on. Sometimes there is actual clash of arms, spilling of blood. At other times there is a cold war, the diplomatic persons of one country trying to out-manoeuvre others. Whatever the strategy, the basic rule of relations between nations is the law of the jungle " the strong feeding upon the weak and getting stronger. It is one of jeevo jeevasya jeevanam, of matsya nyaya, the big fish devouring the small fish and becoming bigger at the cost of the smaller.

The World Reality

Just look at the history of Europe. When the countries of Europe became powerful in the wake of the Industrial Revolution, each one of them stretched its aggressive arms to grab other countries. When Spain became strong it carried its sword to America. Portugal, in its days of power, spread its tentacles of destruction right up to Goa in our country. Whenever France became powerful, it brought under its heels the smaller countries of

Europe. The history of England which spread its empire over distant corners of the globe is only too well known. The story of Germany is not different. It plunged the world in two world wars to satiate its aggressive spirit. Italy, when it felt strong enough, grabbed Abyssinia. Now, Russia, having emerged powerful after the Second World War, had devoured countries like Finland, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Balkan States and even half of Germany. Under the very nose of UNO, it massacred thousands of Hungarian freedom fighters and crushed Hungary under its iron heels. Now Russia is prowling about all over the world, in search of its future prey. China, even at this early stage of its growing power, has bared its claws in Korea and Indo-China. It has already sat tight upon Tibet, devoured parts of Ladakh and NEFA and is now poised for a further drive into the Himalayan States.

Every time a war breaks out, the warlords say that it is a war to end all future wars! After witnessing the horrors of the First World War, people the world over prayed for peace and end of all wars. But within hardly two decades, the world was drenched in the blood-bath of another and a more terrible holocaust. And again after the Second World War, mankind hoped and prayed for peace. But what is the actual state of affairs now? Everywhere there are conflicts, sometimes flaring up into shooting war. The whole of Africa is like the seething bowels of a volcano, erupting every now and then. In its surreptitious move to turn Cuba into its missile base, Russia has pushed the world to the very brink of world conflagration.

Slogans Change, Fact Remains

However, these conflicts and bloodshed are carried on under various garbs. Today, for example, most aggressive and dangerous plans are being hatched under the cover of Communism. Communism, be it remembered, was born with the cry of revolt against domination of every kind. The communists in

Russia and China rose in revolt against their own kings and feudal chiefs, liquidated them and assumed power. But in a short time, they too took to the same path of imperialism, though under the new slogan of liberating the people of the world from the clutches of imperialists and capitalists. They even call their aggressive armies as liberation armies.

What is the story of China and the various East European countries like Hungary, Poland, etc., liberated by Russia? Those who visited China afterwards “ and who had the mental poise and courage to call a spade a spade “ had unequivocally stated that the average man there seemed to scent danger all-round and did not appear to be free in his behaviour. That was the result of Russians and their local agents sitting in their secret nooks and corners of every departments and dominating each sphere of national life, its army, its navy, its air force, its farming, scarcely coming out in the open but tightly holding their overall supremacy.

Of course, some people were there in China who went about singing the praise of New China, of the great leap and our great brother Russia and so on. Even in our country, when the British were ruling, there were some persons who went about the world saying that British rule was a godsend, a boon, as if the British were direct messengers of God, sent for our emancipation. We will always find such slaves who extol to the skies their masters. If the masters flog them they will praise the strength of the masters and say, "What a fine whip he has and how well he wields it"! Now, China is repeating the same story of liberation in the case of Tibet.

America too stood up against the imperialistic tyranny of Britain, overthrew its domination and established its independence. The same America, maybe with a view to containing the rising danger of Communism, is now trying to bring a large number of countries under its wing by giving them economic aid and

sometimes military aid too. But as we know, arthasya purusho dasah. Wherever economic aid comes some sort of mental enslavement also follows. Thus we find in all such poor countries receiving the America aid the imprint of American culture, corroding their national ideals, traditions and originality in every sphere of life.

Mirage of Mutual Friendship

What then is the way out to maintain our national integrity and glory in this world of conflicts? Can we depend upon the friendship and alliance of other nations? Here too the lesson of world history affords us no streak of hope. Friendship or hostility between any two nations has never been a permanent feature. Nations change their friends and foes as it suits their self-interest.

The story of the permutations and combinations of relationship between nations of Europe in the last few centuries makes interesting reading. England and France were bitter enemies for centuries. When France, under Napolean, posed a challenge to England, the latter developed friendly ties with Germany and crushed France. Later, when Germany became too powerful, England and France came together in both the world wars and crushed Germany. In the beginning of the Second World War, Russia remained neutral but later joined Germany to get a share in the loot. But still later, England manoeuvred to wean away Russia from Germany and Russia joined the camp of America, England and France. America, too, during her struggle for independence, was hostile to England but friendly to France. The picture changed after a few years, and again England became its friend. Such has been the history of mutual friendship between nations on the face of the earth. Nor can we expect anything different so long as the spirit of self- aggrandisement and domination rules the minds of nations. So, to seek permanent security in the form of friendship with other nations would be just a delusion.

Friendship of Giant and Dwarf

Today the world appears to be torn into two power-blocs. Seeing their power and splendour, and our own weakness in comparison, there are some who advocate our joining the one or the other bloc so as to be able to breathe freely under its protective wings. But then, to remain weak oneself and become an ally of the strong is not without its grave risks.

Once a giant and dwarf became friends. They embarked upon an adventure to a forest. There they found a band of dacoits sharing among themselves the booty of a vast amount of wealth. The giant put the dacoits to rout, took all the wealth and returned. Unfortunately, in the fury of the fight, the dwarf lost one of his hands. After some time they again set out on another adventure. This time they came across a fort with people imprisoned and tyrannised by a cruel despot. The giant killed the tyrant; and the people out of gratitude chose him as their king thereafter. This time the dwarf lost one of his legs. The giant got a big fort and many dutiful subjects.

The dwarf, cursing his ill luck and envying the good fortune of the giant, thought that something must be done to gain some advantage for himself also. So he started on his crutches along with the giant once again. As luck would have it, they chanced to see a princess being taken away by some miscreants. She was rescued and taken to her father by the giant. Out of gratitude the king offered the princess to the giant in marriage along with his kingdom. The dwarf lost one eye in that mercy campaign. The upshot was, the giant got two kingdoms, a princess for a wife and a vast store of wealth; and his friend the dwarf, lost one hand, one foot and one eye!

The moral is too evident. The friendship between the strong and the weak is bound to result in the strong taking away the profits

leaving the weak to suffer the losses. That is what we witness in the international field also. The powerful nations build their strategic frontiers away from their own national frontiers with a view to carrying on the war against the enemies on others soil and avoiding the calamities of war on their own soil. We see the Russian armies spread out in distant countries. We have seen the American armies fighting in Korea, in Viet Nam. The smaller countries thereby become war-fields for the trial of strength of bigger powers, and the local people treated by them as so much cannon-fodder.

Strength for Peace

When we thus read the world correctly, we are forced to arrive at simple conclusion that the only basis for our free and prosperous national life is invincible national strength " a strength that will strike terror into the hearts of aggressive powers and make other nations seek our friendship. Strength is the very elixir of national life.

In fact, to remain weak is to extend invitation to aggression and depredation by stronger foreign powers. It is the weak who are thus responsible for the disturbance of peace in the world. Churchill called the Second World War an unnecessary war. As England and France could easily have held Germany in check in the initial stages and avoided war if only they had displayed the nerve and strength to do it. But they remained unprepared and weak and thus indirectly fanned the German war-spirit. To be strong is the real path to peace.

Even today we see that because America and Russia are equally strong neither is prepared to risk a global war. Both are in possession of world-destructive missiles and both are aware that neither would survive a nuclear holocaust. The Cuba episode holds a great lesson for us. Russia attempted to sabotage the

security of America by secretly turning Cuba into its missile base. But the drastic and timely action on the part of America checked the Russian adventure and saved the world from a future world conflagration.

But this does not mean that the weaker countries are safe or that wars have come to an end. Only the final nuclear showdown is being avoided and postponed to a future date. All other things are going on as before. We often hear the wise man of our country assuring us that we need not to be worried about any foreign power risking a war with us as that would involve the whole of humanity in a nuclear conflagration. But it would be very naÃ¯ve on our part to believe that others are as much afraid of war as we are. Even without a formal declaration of war, enemies invade and occupy territories. There is the glaring instance of our own country losing large chunks of territory to Pakistan in Kashmir and Kutch and to China in Ladakh and NEFA all without a declaration of war! The same story is being, repeated in Indo-China and other places even today.

The Ultimate Sanction

Nowadays in our country we hear a lot about non-alignment, dynamic neutrality, etc., as if they are our life-saving principles. But will they really help the weak? In the event of an attack by an aggressive power, how are we going to save ourselves? Shall we not have to throw ourselves into the arms of one or the other power-bloc for our protection? Then, that would indeed be the dynamic neutrality of a football which is impartial and neutral by itself but is also dynamic being kicked about from one side to the other! Moreover, in the event of a wider conflict, the bigger powers will care two hoots for the neutrality of the weak.

For Real Neutrality

During the First World War, Germany chose the plains of the neutral Netherlands to cross its armies into France in order to avoid the hazardous mountainous border between Germany and France. Germany never bothered itself about the protestations of neutrality by Belgium and trampled their neutrality under its military boot. If these countries too were armed to the teeth, then Germany would not have dared to incur their wrath.

The example of Switzerland affords a striking contrast. During the last war, Switzerland maintained its strict neutrality. The country is comparatively poor, but the peoples heart is vibrant with intense patriotic zeal, national pride and an indomitable spirit of freedom. The international rule is that neutral countries cannot be utilised as a corridor for the transit of foreign armies or arms during wars. Once during the war, English planes were seen flying over Switzerland on way to bomb Germany. Immediately, a warning was given to those planes to quit the air space of Switzerland forthwith. But the English, in their inflated consciousness of strength, ignored the warning. Then Switzerland, without compunction, shot down those planes. Later, England sent a long letter of protest. But Switzerland replied that she was a free nation determined to preserve her neutrality and if there was a recurrence of similar violation of her sovereignty, the same results would follow!

Staking Fact on a Fiction

But in our country a queer notion has gained ground that in this world we will be able to pull through with happiness and honour even without being strong, that just an appeal to the higher sentiments of man, to Panchsheel, or an appeal to the UNO will act as a solvent for all human conflicts. All such perverse notions are being paraded as universal truths.

Our leading personalities even preach to our army the virtues of internationalism and world brotherhood! Once a military officer and another gentleman were travelling with we in train. They were conversing in Urdu. The military officer remarked, "Oh! You speak very nice Urdu." The other gentleman replied, "Yes I have studied Urdu during my school days. But now, as I have grown older, my love for Urdu has disappeared." The military officer asked, "What is the reason?" He replied, " When I read Urdu or Persian, the picture that comes up before me in all their literature is some bul-bul, some Persia, some Euphrates, Tigris, but nothing of my country." The military officer exclaimed, "How narrow-minded and medieval you are! Now the times are such that we should give up thinking in narrow confines of country, nation and so on. Now we have to think in terms of the whole world." Suppose such an army officer goes out for war; will he be able to fight with conviction for the protection of his country? At any moment the world consciousness in him may revolt and he may feel, "What is all this humbug? Why should I fight? What does it matter if they conquer? After all they are as much human beings as we are!" Then what will be our fate? Will such world consciousness save us from annihilation?

Once upon a time there was a Jyotishi. As we know, the world has never been free from problems. This Jyotishi was perturbed. Anxious to know future of the world he set out to note the positions of the various planets influencing the earth. As he walked out of his village, seeing one planet after another and weaving his web of fancies and fears, he fell into a well. Fortunately for the Jyotishi the well was long abandoned and dry. He shouted for rescue. A small party was passing by. When they had pulled him out they asked in wonderment, "But Panditji, how did you manage to land yourself in this out-of-way well?" Paditji detailed his piety for the world and his mission of the planets and sobbed about his fall. His rescuers commented, "Panditji, before

you set out to find the worlds horoscope, had you but read your own, you might have well avoided this fall."

Those gentlemen who today camouflage weakness and ignorance under the booming name of internationalism would be well advised to take a lesson form the sorrows of the Jyotishi and set our national house in order before launching on international enterprise which they have no power to execute. Those who speak of world unity and all that, while the world is governed by power politics and might rules supreme, really do not seem to know what they talk. The one fact of world politics today is the existence of nation-states governed by the one supreme consideration of self-interest and self-aggrandisement. Those who ignore this stake a fact on a fiction.

Once I was addressing a group of elders. I reviewed the state of nation and expressed my opinion that unless we stopped the rot from within and became strong, we will cease to live as a nation. Pat came the too wise remark, "What if we cease to live as a nation? Well live all the same, and live as humanity." I replied, "Why, well live even after we die. Our ashes “ or rather our entombed carcasses “ will remain. For, has not science proved the indestructibility of matter?"

Effects of Self-Hypnosis

Such is the ludicrous and dangerous extent to which the present fads of internationalism, world unity etc., has driven our country today. We are so thoroughly hypnotised by such slogans that we have become incapable of seeing through the aggressive designs of foreign powers who put on the mask of world peace, internationalism, etc., etc. They come and conduct international peace conference here, while they prepare world-destructive missiles in their home countries. The only meaning of all their

moves is that they want to draw us into their camp to serve as cannon-fodder in the future war they are planning. They, of course, want peace. But what kind of peace? With them as the masters and others as slaves, they wish to sleep in peace and desire that the slaves should not quarrel amongst themselves and disturb the sleep of the master! And we, who have become victims of fantastic fads, allow ourselves to be duped, and pat our back on our progressive and international outlook! Do we not see our people going to the so-called international peace conference organised by the Communists, knowing fully well that such tactics are the thin end of the wedge of Communist expansionism?

The slogans and paper compromise like peaceful co-existence and Panchsheel that out leaders are indulging in only serve as a comouflage for the self-seeking predatory countries of the world to pursue their own ulterior motives against our country. China, as we know, was most vociferous in its expression of faith in Panchsheel. China was extolled as our great neighbour and friend for the last two thousand years or more from the day it accepted Buddhism. Our leaders declared that they were determined to stick to Chinas friendship at all costs. Once, we had similarly resolved to win the friendship of Muslims in this land at all costs. How much it has cost us in terms of our national integrity and honour is all too well known. The same history has been repeated in this case also.

Portents Ignored

We have forgotten that the ancient Buddhist China is now dead for the past few years. The Russian wizard has called a spirit in that corpse turning in into a fiend. And we are today witnessing its devil-dance on our borders. When it devoured Tibet and Pandit Nehru mildly protested, he was curtly admonished not to poke his nose in their internal affair. Our late Prime Minister silently

gulped down the national humiliation. Form then on, we had been continuously paying the ever-mounting price to maintain Chinas friendship and the glory of Panchsheel-the historic treaty of eternal friendship and fraternity between the two great countries “ on which solemn signatures of the two great Prime Ministers were affixed at the same time when the Chinese army trucks were rolling on the military road they had constructed in Ladakh and were grabbing large chunks of our Himalayan territory!

Dr. J.C. Kumarappa, a great disciple of Gandhiji and an economist of repute, after his visit to Russia and China had even in those days categorically warned that in their eyes the treaty of Panchsheel was not worth the paper on which it was written. But our leaders continued to roam in their own dreamland, shutting their eyes to the glaring signs of the all-enveloping danger of Communist Chinas aggression. The Communists in our country distributed copies of a new map of China showing therein portions of all Himalayan territories “ Ladhakh, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, and NEFA (indicating the five fingers of the aggressive fist of China protruding from Tibet)- and of Burma. Our Government did not even confiscate these maps.

When Khrushchev visited our country and was in Kashmir, he declared, "When you are in distress, climb the top of these mountains and shout for help. We will always be ready on the other side to rush to your help." Let us not forget that their henchmen are here who may at any time raise that cry for help?

At the same time when Khrushchev and Bulganin were being greeted with unprecedented ovations all over the country and acclaimed as heroes of world peace, there was a Russian documentary film being exhibited in our country. The film opens with the scene of Moscow and the commentator declares, "Moscow, the capital of the future world"! If Moscow is to

become the capital, does it not imply that the whole world must needs be under the heels of Russia?

The Washermans Donkey

We are still unable to free ourselves form the delusion that our international prestige has risen high because of such pious platitudes. But what are the facts? For instance, take Pakistan. This flesh of our flesh does not lose a single opportunity to fling at us its impudent insult, kill and kidnap our men and officers, shoot down our planes and carry on regular genocide of Hindus still living there. And now, it has invaded our country. Ceylon, a tiny country, is throwing out lakhs of our brethren staying in that land for generations. Burma also has followed suit. We referred the Kashmir issue to the UNO as the aggrieved party and in spite of our high international prestige, that world forum is now treating us on par with the aggressor! It is claimed that our influence counted in getting released eleven American pilots imprisoned in China, that we played a notable role in Korea and so on. Then, why has not that great international prestige come into play in all these matters where our national hounour and integrity are gravely jeopardised? Or is that prestige similar to that of the washermans donkey whose fate it is to work all day for its master and then be driven out to fend for itself.

Our leaders often repeat that because of our policy of peace and non-alignment we are befriended and respected by all the big powers. They point to the economic aid that we are receiving form America and even from Russia. But it is the same America, which is arming our enemy Pakistan with the latest arms. Is it a sign of friendship to feed us on economic aid like a sacrificial goat on the one hand and on the other supply arms to those aggressing on us? Much need not be said about Russia, which has declared its unbreakable bonds of brotherhood with China in

contrast with its friendship for Bharat and has often acted as the driving force behind Chinas aggressive designs.

In our simplicity, we take the words and diplomatic moves of the world powers at their face value and begin to flatter ourselves that we occupy a great position in the councils of the world. To give an example, some years ago Srimati Vijayalakshmi Pandit was elected as the President of the General Assembly of the UNO. But what was the ulterior motive behind the move of bestowing that great honour on our country? Just then, the treacherous plot of Sheikh Abdullah to turn Kashmir into an independent state had been exposed. He had been dismissed and arrested. The intrigues of UN agents in abetment of that foul plot were also thoroughly exposed. The Anglo-Americans-whose tools those UN agents were-became anxious to devise ways and means to save their face and retain their foothold in Kashmir and bring our country into an amicable mood so as to continue their designs unhampered. And what better tactics could they have devised than bestowing the august honour of the UN Presidentship upon the sister of the then Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru? That was a subtle form of flattery and nothing more. But we, in our simplicity, took it as a genuine honour done to us.

A Lesson for the Present

Thus we find that the various high-sounding concepts that we have taken up as the sheet-anchor of our national prestige and progress have really no value in this world of hard reality. However, in spite of burning our fingers repeatedly, we are not able to overcome the infatuation for wishful thinking. This has been a curse on our people not merely now but for a number of centuries past. When Chengiz Khan was planning to invade our country he came to know that a large number of people in our N.W. region had embraced Buddhism. So he made a show of becoming a Buddhist and then invaded. Many of the Buddhist

here, seeing that he was their co-religionist, went forward to welcome him. The result was, Chengiz Khan could raise mountain-high heaps of human heads “ all under the non-violent cover of Buddhism!

World Worships Strength

Let us at least now recognise the truth that for real national honour and peace, there is no other way except the building of invincible national strength. It is only then that the great principles that we preach to the world will carry weight and prestige. The world is not prepared to listen to the philosophy, however sublime, of the weak. There is an old incident, which appeared in many of our important papers. Our great national bard Rabindranath Tagore had gone to Japan. He was to address the University students on the greatness of Hindu philosophy. But the lecture hall remained vacant except for a few professors! Thinking that such a poor show would be an insult to the distinguished visitor, one of the professors tried to persuade the students, who were standing far away, to attend the lecture. The students firmly refused saying, "We do not want to listen to the philosophy of a slave nation"!

The world worships only the strong. Before the last war, when England was powerful, our people tried to imitate and eulogise the English. But when, during the war, it appeared for a time that Germany would win, they began to adore Hilter and even Nazism. We know of persons now most vociferous in their condemnation of Hitler and Nazism but who were turning their radios in secret to listen to German news in those days with a sense of admiration. How elated they were to hear of the fall of France within hardly two weeks of German invasion! Now the very same persons worship either America or Russia because these happen to be the countries, which shattered the military might of Germany and stand today as great world powers. The fascination communism

holds for many people today is mainly due to the show of brute strength by the votaries of Communism-Russia and China. That is the way of the world. Nobody cares a whit for the voice of the weak. Long ago our forefathers had declared that the desires of the poor and weak are just castles in the air-

"Utpadyante vileeyante
daridranaam manorathaah"

Strength is Virtue, Weakness is Sin

Whatever the external conditions, it is the weak who suffer. No amount of external adjustment or juxtapositions will be able to save a nation if it is inherently weak. To remain weak is the most heinous sin in this world, as that would destroy oneself and also incite feelings of violence in others. Our forefathers have said that physical survival is part of the highest religion and for physical survival strength is the only basis. It is said of Vishwamitra that once during an acute famine he did not get any food for days together. One day he saw the rotting leg of a dead dog lying in a Chandalas house. Vishwamitra snatched it and got ready to eat it by first making an offering to God. The Chandala exclaimed, "Oh, sage, how is it you are eating a dogs leg?" Vishwamitra replied, "Yes I must first live and be strong enough in order to do penance and good deeds in the world."

But the thinking in our country during the last few decades has been one of looking down upon strength as something sinful and reprehensible. A wrong interpretation of non-violence has deprived the national mind of the power of discrimination. We have begun to look upon strength as violence and to glorify our weakness.

Once a Sadhu said, "The very word ahimsa(non-violence) is a negative expression derived form himsa(violence) by prefixing a

(non) to the positive idea of himsa (violence). A person sufficiently strong to do himsa, but not doing so out of restraint, discretion and compassion can alone be said to be practising ahimsa. Suppose a strong man is going in a road and somebody knocks against him. If the strong man says with compassion, "All right, my dear fellow, I excuse you for the wrong you have done me", then we say that the strong man has practised non-violence. For, though he is capable of giving him a blow and smashing his skull, he has restrained himself. Suppose, a thin, lean man " just a mosquito! " is going and somebody pulls his ears and the mosquito trembling form head to foot says, "Sir, I excuse you", who will believe him? Who will say that he is practising non-violence? He is like a man who, unable to check the dacoits plundering his house, loudly proclaims vasudhaiva kutumbakam (the entire world is my home)! People will only say that he is a coward and hypocrite, that he dare not to do anything and is only hiding his cowardice behind big platitudes. The atmosphere of our country today is charged with such misconceptions and platitudes of self-deception. A dense cloud of dust is raised in the form of high-sounding words like peace and non-violence with an assumed air of moral authority only to cover up our imbecility.

Non-Violence of the Imbecile

It is because of such perverse notions that we have been losing all-round. We find our frontiers shrinking. No one is in a mood to protect the integrity and honour of the motherland. Every national insult is covered up under the mast of peace. Day after day insults are being heaped upon us. Our people are being shot down by the enemies. And China presents the dead bodies of our eleven soldiers on the birthday of Pandit Nehru! All these we gulp down saying that we are devotees of peace! It is said in the Mahabharata that a person who goes on swallowing insults is neither a male nor a female.

“Etaavaaneva purusho
Yadamarshi yadakshami
Kshamaavaan niramarshascha
Naiva stree na punah puman”

(*He alone is a man who does not brook or forgive insults. One who remains cold and tolerant in the face of insults is neither a male not a female.*)

The Great Examples

Our philosophy tells us that man should be humble only when he is capable of humbling others. When can one be forgiving? Only when one becomes powerful enough to strike down those who insult him. When should one serve others? Only when he becomes worthy of commanding the willing service of the entire world. We see this ideal in Sri Krishna who preached ahimsa in Gita, after annihilating the many evil demons one after another right form his childhood. It was he who slew Kamsa, reinstated Ugarasena on the throne but himself remained as the sentinel at the court entrance, welcoming the royal guests. It was again he who took upon himself the menial service of removing the leaves after meals in the great Rajasuya Yaga of Yudhishthira, where he was the person honoured with Agrapooja! Such is the message of our philosophy.

All our great masters who have set the standards of our national conduct have always blended idealism with realism, the highest principles of human welfare with the demands of the practical world. There is an incident, narrated in the popular lore, which took place while the battle between Rama and Ravana was at a high pitch. Lakshmana, after killing Meghanada, the son of Ravana, had brought his head to his camp. Meghanadas wife Sulochana, who wanted to ascend the funeral pyre along with her husbands body, proceeded towards Ramas camp to request him to

return the head of her husband. The soldiers on the side of Rama, seeing a beautiful woman approaching their side from Ravanas camp, concluded that she must be Sita herself. They were agog with joy and jubilation and were about to lay down their arms. But when Sri Rama heard of the excitement and the reason for it, he calmly told, "Do not forget that Ravana with his ten heads and twenty arms is still very much alive. It is only after walking over the dead body of Ravana that we can enter Lanka and free Sita. Do not dream of seeing Sita till then. Do not be under any such illusion." With his thorough grasp of human psychology, he had correctly assessed Ravanas nature and had concluded that the rakshasas evil tendency was too deep-rooted to allow him to change under any circumstances and that his menace could be eliminated by the unfailing Ramabana alone. Ramas upholding of the highest standards of human life and his conviction in the ultimate sanction of strength were two aspects of the same character that made him Maryada-Purushottama (the ideal man).

And again in the Mahabharata Sri Krishna, on the battle-field of Kurukshetra, invoked manliness in Arjuna with the call:

“Klaibyam maa sma gamah Partha”

(*Yield not to imbecility, O Partha!*) not only the message of the Gita, but the context in which it was delivered, and the preceptor who gave it out, and the pupil, are all cast in a heroic setting. Sri Krishna, the preceptor, was accepted on all hands as the supreme hero of that Yuga. Arjuna, the pupil, too was a warrior par excellence, only next to Sri Krishna. And Bhagvad “ Gita, the greatest treasure-house of spiritual knowledge, is the dialogue on the battlefield between these two great heroes of those times. This only highlights the fact of human life that the establishment of righteousness and virtues in this world of conflicts is not possible without the quality of fearlessness and heroism. Of course, Arjuna

was not a coward. But having seen his own elders and preceptors ranged against him, he was riddled with doubts about the rectitude of his course of action. He did not want to run away from the battlefield. On the contrary, keeping aside his arms, he wanted to die at hands of his adversaries, in a spirit of resignation.

"Yadi maamaprateekaram
Ashastram shastrapaanayah
Dhartaraashtraah rane hanyuh
Tanme kshemataram bhavet"

(*Far bettter would it be for me if sons of Dhritrashtra, weapons in hand, should slay me in the battle, while I remain in non-retaliating and unarmed.*)

The same confusion appears to have gripped the hearts of our leaders today. Words like non-retaliation, peace etc., are being shouted form housetops. Of course, there is a vast difference between the mental conditions of the two. Arjuna was a hero to the very core; while the protestations of high-flown words like non-retaliation etc., that we hear today are put up as a smoke-screen to cover up our imbecility.

The Right Philosophy

In the world of today, whether one desire it or not, conflicts are bound to arise. Merely because we remain pious, does it imply that others also will be cured of their wicked tendencies? Can there be a greater self-deception than believing in such a palpably absurd superstition? The sacrificial goat which is peacefully led to the alter of sacrifice is, in fact, the very embodiment of non-retaliation! Without the slightest murmur, it puts its head under the knife of the butcher. The butcher never feels for a moment that he should not kill such an innocent, non-violent creature. At the same time no one dares even to think of offering a tiger in

sacrifice. It is only the weak, docile, non-violent goat that is pitched upon for sacrifice. There is a saying,

“Ashvam naiva gajam naiva
Vyaghram naiva cha naiva cha
Ajaaputram balim dadyaat
Daivo durbalaghatakah”

(*It is not the horse, not the elephant, and never never the tiger but the goat that is offered in sacrifice; even gods destroy the weak.*) Such is the fruit of the attitude of non-retaliation! of course, we should not indulge in unprovoked violence. At the same time, we should also not allow others to do violence to us. Allowing violence to be done to oneself is also violence and therefore adhrama. Once a great Jain Sadhu explaining the significance of ahimsa said, "If you are faced with a brute force bent upon destroying you and you do nothing to protect yourself in the name of ahimsa, then you will have only encouraged the evil power to indulge in violence. You thus become an abettor in the crime and an abettor is as much guilty of the crime as the actual perpetrator." He added, "Intention, and not the physical act, is the only criterion to decide whether the act is in the nature of himsa or ahimsa."

The teaching of the really great ones have always guided us correctly in all such matters. Even a most compassionate saint like Tukaram defined compassion as:

“Dayaa tichen naav bhootanchen
Paalan Aanik nirdalan kantakaanche”

(*Compassion is protection of all living beings and destruction of the wicked elements*).

Usually the names of two great men are associated with the word non-violence “ Bhagawan Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi. There is an instance in the life of Buddha, significant in this connection. The commander-in chief of a particular kingdom came to him to receive deeksha and become his disciple. Buddha asked him as to what had prompted him to become a bhiksu. To that, the commander replied, "Enemies have invaded our territory. I am now required to lead our forces against them. But that will lead to violence and bloodshed on both sides. I felt that it would be sinful act. I therefore decided to relinquish the military responsibility and have come over here to follow your path of peace and non-violence." Buddha counseled him: "Merely because you have come away, the enemies are not going to give up their aggression. They are bound to indulge in killing and ravaging. If you forsake your duty of protecting the innocents under your charge, the sin of all that violence will visit upon your head. Protection of the good and righteous is verily a duty enjoined by Dharma. No sin will attach to you while doing this duty. So, go back and carry our your assignment." That was how Buddha interpreted the true meaning of ahimsa.

Gandhiji too preached in the same strain. Once when the Muslims went on a rampage and attacked the Hindus in Ahmedabad, the Hindus began fleeing form their hearths and homes. Gandhiji castigated them saying, "Why are you behaving like cowards? You take my name and repeat the word ahimsa parrot-like and run for your life under that shelter. My non-violence is not of the cowards, it is of the brave. Instead of running away in such a cowardly fashion it would be far better for you to fight, to kill or get killed." Sri Krishna has unequivocally and for all time to come declared that establishment of dharma implies the destruction of the evil-doers:

“Vinaashaaya cha dushkritaam”

Sri Krishna himself was the very embodiment of that principle. No doubt he exerted himself to the utmost to avoid war and bring about peace. But he clearly foresaw that the ultimate sanction lay in his own supreme strength. When he was about to go to Duryodhana for bringing about a compromise Dharmaraja became anxious about his safety fearing that the evil-natured Duryodhana might harm Sri Krishna. Sri Krishna assured him that in that event Dharmaraja would get the kingdom without a war as he himself would destroy Duryodhana and his host of associates. That is the only right view regarding the role of strength while facing adversaries. To speak and act always in terms of applying force when it is not needed and when a just and honourable compromise is possible is inhuman and brutal. But to talk always of compromise and not to use force even when there is no other way out to undo injustice and insults is sheer cowardice and imbecility.

We, therefore, have to properly understand the true message of those great lives as lived by them in this world of hard realities. And the hard reality is that the world, as it is constituted today, understands but one language “ the language of strength. It is on the unshakable foundation of immense strength alone that the nation rises and maintains itself in a glorious condition.

For an Invincible National Will

Where does this strength come from? What is that real and inexhaustible source of national strength? It is the consolidated, dedicated and disciplined life of the people as a whole. After all, the various spheres of national life are only so many manifestations of the innate strength of the people. Political power is one such manifestation. Military power is the well disciplined, intensely patriotic and heroic attitude of the people.

It has been truly said that it is not the gun but the heart behind it that fights. Without a strong patriotic heart no amount of arms and ammunition will save the country. There is an incident which occurred in Nagpur during what people call "Hindu-Muslim" riot (but which is invariably a Muslim riot as it is always the Muslim who strikes first and it is the Hindu who bears the brunt). During the disturbance a Hindu sat upstairs in his house with a loaded gun. Some Muslim goondas attacked his house, but as the doors were tightly secured they could not enter inside. Then one of them flourished a small axe in his hand, shouting to the person sitting above to throw down the gun or else he would be cut into pieces! Struck with terror, the Hindu gentlman actually let down that gun and was shot down with the same gun! So, it is the fearless and steel-willed man alone who can wield weapons and protect himself. Similar is the case with a nation.

It is on these practical and realistic guidelines of national conduct that our people can hope to rise again as great nation. All our efforts have therefore to be concentrated in the direction of generating invincible national strength by making our people nationally conscious and moulding them all for a well disciplined, co-ordinated and invincibly powerful national entity, which alone is the ultimate sanction for a free and glorious national life on the face of this earth.

23. Worshippers of Victory

Our great men stand as lamp posts on the path to the fulfillment of our national life-mission and national glory. In order that the coming generations may pursue that path with success, it is essential that their inspiring memories and examples are kept undimmed in the national mind and the lessons of the lives and deeds of those masters of thought and action are presented in their true perspective. It is precisely with this end in view that the celebration of the anniversaries of birth and death of our ancient heroes has found a pride of place in our national tradition since hoary times.

Deifying the Great

But unfortunately a serious perversion has crept into this tradition of recollecting the ideals set up by those great ancestors. Our people, placing implicit faith in the Gita verse "

"Yadyadvibhootimatsatvam Shreemadoorjitameva vaa
Tattadevaavagachha tvam
Mama tejomshasambhavam"

every such element as is endowed, with glory, brilliancy or power know that to be manifestation of spark of Divine Effulgence - see in the extraordinary power of such great souls a sign of the manifestation of Divinity, a Spark of the Divine Effulgence. So far, it is all right.

But this has led to a delusive belief that all such great men are super-human beings far above and beyond the reach of the common man. The common man, feeling himself a creature of circumstances, tries to find a path of escape for himself by

pushing them into the orbit of divinity. For, thereby, he will be absolved of the responsibility of following them in his practical day-to-day life, which would entail for him various trials and tribulations. He, in his weakness and helplessness, also implores God to come to his rescue and save him from the trouble of facing all these dangers. He, on his part, feels that he should sit comfortably at home and that all things be set right by God's grace!

Coupled with this is the craze for maximum benefits and enjoyment with minimum responsibility and risk to oneself in practically all fields of life today. Nowhere do we come across the spirit of manliness, which makes one say, "Well, I am a 'man'. I shall put forth manly efforts and discharge my duties with utmost exertion without caring for any eventuality, be it happiness or misery." That is the reason why a person born in a wealthy family is taken to be highly fortunate because without any effort he is the master of all comfort and luxury. He is not to worry himself for his food and drink. There are servants at his beck and call for doing every little work leaving him all the time to wallow in vulgar pleasures. Thus, due to helplessness in one's life or due to such craze for enjoyment, the common man naturally feels that he should not be called upon to do anything by himself. He thinks, "Let God come down to earth and take me to the shores across the whirlpool of adversities. Let him shower comforts upon me, end His incarnation and return to His abode"!

It is with such fond hopes that in times of difficulty an ordinary man prays and takes refuge in God as if the Almighty will be moved by his prayers and will appear on earth to protect him and redeem His pledge to-

“Paritraanaaya saadhunam
Vinaashaaya cha dushkritaam
Dharmasamsthaapanaarthaaya

Sambhavaami yuge yuge"

(*For the protection of the saints, for the destruction of the wicked and for the establishment of Dahrama, I am born again and again.*)

In this regard, our founder used to jocularly remark, "I, on the other hand, implore Almighty not to take birth just now. For, finding the whole of society immersed in indolence and selfishness, i.e. in adharma, he would only destroy it completely according to his pledge of destroying adharma! So, let us become sadhus first, which means leading a life of effort and sacrifice in the cause of society, and then call the Almighty. Then only will He save us and destroy the evil-doers."

But the common mass of people feel that their duty is over by remembering sometimes those great 'Incarnations' and worshiping them as Divinity Manifest. They have no will or desire to do anything more. For example, our people have regarded Sri Ramachandra as an Incarnation of Vishnu and have been worshipping him all these centuries. But in the case of most of us, it was never with a view to imbibing his manly virtues and manifesting Rama in ourselves. Our founder used to narrate an interesting incident in this connection. Once, while talking to an elderly gentleman, who was used to reciting Adhyatama Ramayana at home regularly, our founder casually asked him which quality of Sri Rama had appealed to him most and had inspired him to emulate it in his life. On hearing those words the gentleman flew into a veritable rage and exclaimed," What nonsense! Do you think we mortals can emulate the qualities of a god? The recitation is meant to give us spiritual merit for attaining salvation, what more do we want?"

The same has been the attitude towards Sri Krishna. We regarded Gita as a divine scripture, got by rote all its verses, recited it, praised it in superlatives, but never once imagined that Bhagavad

- Gita is the greatest treatise on human duties intended to be followed in our day-to-day practical life. We find this fantastic notion gripping our mind in all walks and strata of our social life.

To give a recent example. Lokamanya Tilak was a great karmayogi and an outstanding national leader. But after his passing away neither his followers nor the common people bothered to emulate his great life and his noble virtues. Nor did they strive to continue his wise political traditions. On the other hand, they erected his statues, opened a few schools, raised funds in his name, celebrated his birthdays and profusely showered on him their verbal homage! And with this, they felt satisfied as having done their duty towards the Lokamanya. Some of the innocent, simple-minded devotees to Tilak even made him Chaturbhuja (four handed) and worshiped him, meaning thereby that he was an Incarnation of God and they were only poor mortals. How could they, then, hope to rise to those heights of godhood? Their life was after all meant only to eat, drink, earn money, rear up children and finally die one day!

Effort is Almighty

It is this mentality of saving one's skin that makes the people thrust the great men into the orbit of godhead. The ordinary man is confounded and terrified when surrounded by calamities. Not knowing anything else to do, he takes refuge in God. He wails and weeps and prays to God 'to come once again'. In that darkness of despair he finds no ray of hope except God. We sometimes see even great Saints and Scholars bewailing in that manner. And if, under such circumstances, a great man appears on the scene and changes the course of events with his prowess, fortitude and sagacity, then he is readily thrown into the rank of gods. But it is sheer weakness that makes one push such great men outside the pale of human beings.

We have to change this perverse mentality of our people and plant in its stead an attitude of manliness and effort. Swami Ramdas has said, yatna to deva janava (Effort is God). We should take refuge in God, manifested as human effort. This is the land of duty, karma-bhoomi, the land of human endeavour. It is a soil sanctified by the sweat and blood of human giants. It is here that all our latent powers and virtues blossom forth and our latent divinity awakened. Let this right conviction inspire us to step forward on the path of human effort. Let us worship and revere those great souls not as gods but as men just like us but who have risen to those heights by dint of their personal efforts. When Ravana abducted Sita, Sri Ramachandra bewailed and shed tears as anyone of us would do when struck by misfortune in our family life. By this he proclaimed to the world that he too was a human being just as anyone else. Though he ate and drank, slept and walked like anyone of us and felt all the common emotions of a human being, each moment of his beckons us with its highest ideal of manhood attained through supreme personal effort.

Our great saints and devotees have no doubt laid great stress on prayer to the Almighty. But they never preached inaction in life. Such devotees who indolently weep in the name of God have always been held in utmost ridicule. All our great men have persistently striven to infuse the spirit of manliness and duty in our society. They stand before us as glorious examples of human endeavour and achievement in various walks of life. We are the children of all those heroes of action. Their blood flows in our veins. They did not drop from the heavens as readymade great men. They scaled those heights of greatness on the strength of their effort, intelligence, fortitude, sacrifice and such other manly virtues. Why should we not have the faith that we too, to some extent at least, can manifest the same virtues in our life? If we have to rise as a great nation, it is most essential that we take up this correct attitude whenever we look upon the lives and deeds of the great ones of the past.

Worship of the Victorious

Let us now see what type of great lives have been worshipped in this land. Have we ever idealised those who were a failure in achieving life's goal? No, never. Our tradition has taught us to adore and worship only those who have proved fully successful in their life-mission. A slave of circumstances has never been our ideal. The hero who becomes the master of the situation, changes it by sheer dint of his calibre and character and wholly succeeds in achieving his life's aspirations, has been our ideal. It is such great souls, who by their self-effulgence, lit up the dismal darkness surrounding all round, inspired confidence in frustrated hearts, breathed life into the near-dead and held aloft the living vision of success and inspiration, that our culture commands us to worship.

A Sri Ram is our ideal, who on the strength of his valour, sagacity and will-power vanquished so powerful a tyrant as Ravana who had enslaved the whole world and imprisoned 'the 33 crores of gods'. And again the glorious ideal of one, who with his incomparable powers of body and intellect could easily have got himself crowned as an invincible monarch but refused to do so, comes up before us in the form of the wholly fruitful life of Sri Krishna. Our objects of worship have always been such successful lives. It is obvious that those who were failures in life must have had some serious drawback in them. How can one, who is defeated, give light and lead others to success? How can flame faltering at every whiff of the breeze illumine our path? It is only such a life which stands like a towering lighthouse, erect and undimmed amidst all ranging tempests and rains and constantly dispels darkness, that can guide the ship of our life to the shores of success.

Martyr, Great but Not Ideal

When a society is continuously subjected to all sorts of calamities and stark despair stares it in the face, it develops various types of mental complexes. There are some who go down under the weight of disasters and helplessly look forward to some divine succour. But when God does not seem to listen their prayers and calamities continue to encompass them more and more, some get infuriated and strive to change the desperate situation. But they do not have enough strength to bring about the desired change. No doubt, discontent burns in them, but they find themselves too weak to face the situation.

But the fire in their hearts does not allow them to sit merely as silent and helpless spectators bewailing their fate. They prefer to lay down their lives displaying a spark of heroism rather than groan under the intolerably oppressive situation. All around them, forces of darkness and despair, ignorance and calumny dance in naked fury - with not a ray of hope, not a single soul to respond to their call. The weak-hearted quail and simply lie low. But those with fire in them refuse to do so and prefer to destroy themselves with a flash of sacrifice. The ordinary man is blinded by the flash of such a death and he exclaims, "What a fiery spirit he was! He broke but did not bend." The people call him a 'martyr' and offer homage to him.

Except our Bharatiya culture, all others adored and idealised martyrdom and have looked upon such martyrs as their heroes. Why do they call Jesus Christ a great soul? Because he was a martyr and offered his life in sacrifice. But in our Bharatiya tradition, this type of immolation is not considered as the highest ideal. There is no doubt that such men who embrace martyrdom are great heroes and their philosophy too is pre-eminently manly. They are far above the average men who meekly submit to fate and remain in fear and inaction. All the same, such persons are not held up as ideals in our society. We have not looked upon their martyrdom as the highest point of greatness to which man

should aspire. For, after all, they failed in achieving their ideal, and failure implies some fatal flaw in them.

The message of 'Incarnation'

Just as we do not idealise one's self-destruction out of frustration in one's personal life, we do not also eulogise this type of self-immolation on the national plane. Real greatness lies in achieving total success in life. In our culture worship has been offered only to such men who by their extraordinary nerve and calibre braved the roughest of seas and storms and finally succeeded in turning the adverse tide of circumstances. They were the makers, and not the mere products, of their times. This is the case with all those great men who are taken to be 'Incarnations'. Whenever our society was gripped by dangers and disasters, and plunged in a stupor and was only bewailing taking the name of God, there arose a gigantic personality who, with his spirit of boundless sacrifice, penance, intelligence and power of action, subdued all adversaries and became a symbol of victory. Whatever the forms assumed - a fish or a boar or a student in the guise of a mendicant - they succeeded in achieving their holy life-mission.

Such are our heroes, the embodiment of victory. The life-breath of our hero-worship is this spirit of 'will to win'. Such souls will never lose sight of the ultimate victory even for a single moment of their life or falter on their path when faced with peril, but constantly press forward and pool their resources so as to rise equal to the task. And ultimately they live to see the glorious victory.

Lessons of Rajput Martyrdom

However, we find in our history that martyrs also have had their honoured and inevitable place in the process of national regeneration. No one can say that their martyrdom has gone in

vain. The number of such heroes who felt martyrs in the cause of freedom of our country is not small. It might be that they had not the calibre to come out victorious but it is a fact that they had the necessary spirit of sacrifice and heroism to gladly embrace death for the protection of swadharma and swasamaj. Along with this individual martyrdom we also find in our society, whole bands of heroes immolating themselves en masse to uphold what they considered as the duty of a warrior - kshatra dharma.

The history of Rajputs is scintillating with such thrilling episodes. When surrounded on all sides by relentless foes and left without a ray of hope, those flowers of Hindu chivalry and valour silently witnessed their mothers and sisters, wives and daughters leaping into the flames of jowhar and then donning saffron robes plunged headlong with their flashing swords into the enemy forces, never to return. They preferred honourable martyrdom to the despicable existence of defeat and disgrace. The Rajputs have, by such glorious deeds of valour and self-sacrifice, written a dazzling and awe-inspiring page of our history. Such flashes of matchless heroism, such a joyful spirit of sporting with death are rarely to be found in the annals of world history. It is but right that we cherish sentiments of pride and respect towards those heroic souls. But it is a fact that those heroes always entered the battlefield with the sole thought of dying and not with the will to win. They were inspired by the sole idea of meeting a hero's death.

“Dvaavimau purushau loke
Soorya-mandala-bhedinau
Parivraad yogayuktascha
Rane chaabhimukho hatah”

(*The all-renouncing yogis and the heroes who die fighting on the battlefield-both of them pierce the solar orbit and attain spiritual beatitude.*)

Imbued with this conviction, the brave Rajput warrior would gladly go forward when the call for battle was given and would charge into the enemy ranks, caring little for life.

As the desire, so the result. If the will to win is supreme, victory ensues; and for one who desires only death, death is sure to come. Even if we plunge such a one, who only aspires to die, in a pond of nectar, he is bound to get drowned in it and die! No one can save him. A person sitting underneath the Kalpavriksha, the tree of fulfillment of desires, gets whatever he desires. And so does the Almighty bless a hero with whatever he intensely desires while doing his duty as a warrior. The martyrdom of Rajputs no doubt reflects remarkable valour and a proud and defiant spirit but at the same time embodies a wrong and suicidal aspiration. It is a memorable but, nevertheless, a sad chapter in the saga of our Bharatiya heroism.

Not Reaction but Action

It is only because of a mistaken notion of kshatra dharma that those heroes destroyed themselves by aspiring to martyrdom. It is also a kind of weakness. To fly into desperation en masse being unable to bear the brunt of circumstances and go down under its weight cannot be our ideal. An emotionally high-strung mind cannot have that calm and collected strength which remains unaffected amidst the distracting pulls of circumstances and which alone can lead one to ultimate victory. Such a mind has not the capacity to think calmly and act so wisely as to overcome the adversities.

Intelligent and mature men do not merely react to circumstances. They boldly act with a will to make circumstances their slave. To a mature man, to kill or to get killed can never be the ideal. His attitude is a constructive one. He silently proceeds on the well thought-out path, which takes him to ultimate victory. And such a

one is our ideal - he who has worshipped victory and successfully fulfilled his mission in life.

True Dharma

Sri Rama, one of our greatest ideals, is a living example of this philosophy of victory. Killing of woman is supposed to be against kshatra dharma. It also ordains one to fight the enemy in the open. Nevertheless Sri Rama Killed the rakshasi Tataka and shot Vali from behind a tree. For, Sri Rama was aware of his ultimate duty of establishing the rule of righteousness by destroying the wicked. The slaying of an innocent woman is sinful but the same principle cannot be applied to a demoness. The technique of fighting also varies according to the nature of the enemy. This is the right understanding of kshatra dharma and Sri Rama followed it. There were in those times discriminating preceptors who preached the right concept; there were heroic disciples too who followed them.

The same has been the case with Sri Krishna and Arjuna. Just as the great war of Mahabharata was about to commence, Arjuna, seeing his elders and teachers like Bhishma, Drona, and others ranged against him, lost his spirits and threw down his bow. Seeing him confounded, Sri Krishna roused him saying, "Is not your name 'Vijaya' (Victory)? Your duty is to achieve victory on the battlefield. Why then do you delude yourself thus? Your foremost duty is to strike down evil and its supporters, whoever they may be, and establish the supremacy of the good and the just."

And again during the battle, when Karna had got down to lift up the wheels of his chariot stuck in the mud, Sri Krishna commanded Arjuna to direct his arrows at him. Karna appealed to Arjuna in the name of dharma, saying that it was adharma to strike at an unarmed and chariotless adversary. Then the great Yogi Sri Krishna thundered, "O Karna! What are the dharmic

injunctions you have followed till today that you now come forward to preach dharma to us? Where had your dharma gone when all of you had surrounded the unarmed lad Abhimanyu and slaughtered him shamelessly? Where had your dharma disappeared when you insulted a helpless woman, Draupadi, in an open assembly? I know only one dharma to protect, and that is Dharmaraja!" It was because Sri Krishna presented this correct perspective and thereby steeled the will of Arjuna that the latter could fight the war and bring laurels of victory to the forces of dharma.

The Philosophy of Will to Win’

This has been our philosophy - the philosophy of victory of the forces of righteousness over the forces of evil-preached and practised over millennia. Even today, the demoniac forces of evil are strutting about the world stage, armed with world-destructive weapons and threatening the very future of humanity. It is only on the strength of our philosophy, which steels our will to win that we can inspire mankind to face this new challenge of adharma. Many a time even renowned thinkers of the West despair of the future. Bertrand Russel, for example is taken to be a great philosopher of the West. Even he, when faced with the prospect of a nuclear holocaust in case of conflict with Communist Powers, said, "Let us be red rather than be dead." What sort of a philosopher is he who counsels despair and not manliness? In fact, that is exactly what the Communists want - to break up the mental resistance to their onslaught. Well, our philosophy and philosophers have never counselled despair in the fight against the forces of evil. Faith in the ultimate triumph of the forces of good over the forces of evil is ingrained in our blood. Vanquishing rakshasas and establishing the kingdom of manava dharma has been our tradition since hoary times. Verily man's real purushatva - manliness - lies in establishing his superiority over the rakshasa. Do we not know that man, even in his early days, did not

succumb to the wild beasts of prey, though they were physically far more fierce and powerful? He conquered them and asserted his superiority. Communists too may appear for the present to be endowed with all such terrible powers of destruction. But the power of goodness inherent in man is more potent and is bound to assert itself and overcome the evil forces in course of time. That is what a true reading of human history tells us and that is what our ancient masters of philosophy have taught us.

Let us, therefore, decide to tread that path, concentrating our attention and strength on reaching the final goal of victory over all the forces of evil. We are to test every act, apparently good or bad, on this touchstone of ultimate victory of the forces of dharma. That which leads to the victory of the virtuous and the righteous, is alone good and meritorious. And the examples and lessons of the victorious and the great will inspire us with the necessary will to win and awaken in us the right discrimination to achieve ultimate victory in the path of dharmasthapana, i.e., establishing righteousness all over the world, which has been our national life-mission since ages.

24. Fight to Win

The Right Measures

Since the 20th of October 1962 there has been an invasion of our country by China. However, the present drive of the Chinese is not unexpected, though our Government seems to have been taken by surprise. When China invaded and annexed Tibet, it was clear that they had no benevolent intentions towards us. Surrounded by Russia on the one side and the ocean on the other, the only direction, the only weak spot China could look to for expansion was Tibet. The British had maintained an independent status for Tibet so that it may serve as a buffer State between Bharat and China. In their zeal to undo what the Britishers had done, our present rulers accepted sovereignty of China over Tibet. And again, as our Government itself has confessed, the Chineese had pressed forward and illegally occupied 12,000 square miles of our territory. In the face of these facts we can hardly accuse China of treachery. Their attitude to our country has been openly hostile for years.

Before we can think of devising effective measures to meet the present threat, we have to first disabuse our minds of preconceived notions and correctly analyse and access the true nature of the enemy and the magnitude of his preparations.

Warnings Ignored

Firstly, we have to keep in mind that China has always been expansionist. It is in its blood. Over one hundred and fifty years ago Napoleon had forewarned not to rouse that yellow giant lest he should prove a grave peril to humanity. Seventy years ago Swami Vivekananda had specifically warned that China would invade Bharat soon after the Britishers quit.

For the past eight years we of the Sangh, too, had been unambiguously warning that China had aggressed into our territory at various strategic points. Then nobody was prepared to believe us. The editor of a leading English daily even said that we were talking like mad men. And now our leaders say that they were taken by surprise!

Now, added to the expansionist blood of China is the intoxicant of Communism, which is an intensely aggressive, expansionist and imperialistic ideology. Thus in Communist China we have the explosive combination of two aggressive impulses. It is a case of -

“Api cha kapih kapishaayana madamattah”

(*Already a monkey, moreover drunk with wine.*) We would therefore only be deluding ourselves and taking false steps in our preparation to face it if we attribute Communist China's aggressiveness only to its racial nature and not to its present Communism also.

Nature of Yellow Peril

Some say that this invasion is a 'godsend' and a 'blessing in disguise' because it has roused and unified our people into a single national entity. Of course, the people have responded magnificently to the call of the hour and have risen as one man with a firm determination to throw out the enemy. But they do not know how to express that determination and what they are required to do. They carried on processions, held demonstrations, burnt effigies and passed resolutions as they were accustomed to do in their struggle against the British. But we must realise that the enemy we are now facing is of a different kind altogether. The Englishmen were a civilized people who generally followed the rule of law. The Chinese are a different propostion. They do not

posses even normal human qualities like kindness, pity or respect for human life. In fact, Mao Tse-tung once openly expressed his desire to see a world war with all the modern nuclear weapons brought into full play. His logic is that majority of people will then be annihilated in America, Russia and all the other countries of Europe. In that holocaust even if, say, 40 crores of Chinese are wiped out still they will have 25 crores left to rule the whole world. To them, that is very simple logic. They do not worry about the loss of the human life. It is just like grass to be cut and replanted! That was the experience in Korea. When they invade they come in waves after waves. When one column is wiped out it is simply replaced by another.

Therefore the technique used against a civilized people like the British is of no use in dealing with the Chinese. Also, it is no use blaming them that they are deceits, wretches and so on. Such abuses only sound like the curses of a weakling who cannot give blow for a blow and therefore tries to satisfy himself by abusing his foe. We should not succumb to that low mentality.

Further, let us bear in mind that today the whole of China is an armed camp. Each adult is trained in arms. They even have an edge over us in superiority of arms. Their leaders too are born and bred over the past several decades in the climate of bloody warfare.

However, we can make up for these adverse factors provided we step up our efforts in grim earnest in the right direction.

Steel People's Will

The first requisite is to steel our will for a nation-wide, determined and organised effort. The struggle is likely to be long and bitter. All of us will be called upon to undergo suffering and sacrifices. Let all of us face these difficulties steadfastly and with

good cheer. There is no doubt that the adoration for our motherland which had been lying dormant in our hearts so long will now bring forth and dispel all dark shadows of selfishness and mutual jealousies. It is indeed encouraging to see so many people coming forward to contribute to the National Defence Fund. I hope more and more of them will give still more. Let all persons physically fit be ready for military service. And let their mothers bless and send forth their sons at this hour of trial. When the five Pandavas went to seek the blessings of their mother Kunti before the commencement of the Mahabharata war, she blessed them saying, "Go ye all to the battle. This is the occasion for which Kshatriya women give birth to sons. Go and give your best in this dharmayuddha." Let every mother speak in the same heroic strain to her sons even now.

Modern wars, be it remembered, are total wars. They are not merely pitched battles between armies. Every one, right from the scientist and industrialist to the labourer and farmer, will have to work harder and longer in a spirit of national dedications, shelving aside all other considerations of personal and group interests, disputes and claims for the time being.

Leadership on Trial

The second requisite is a leadership with an adamantine will, which will not be unnerved by the present crisis and climb down to talks of peace. But some of our top leaders are so much infatuated with notions of peace that they are already swept off their feet by the present Chinese declaration of cease-fire. They feel that peace should be purchased at all costs. It was in this process of 'purchasing peace at all costs' that our motherland was vivisected fifteen years ago. It was again in the same process that we lost one third of Kashmir. Now Berubari is on the way. Let the lesson of these past tragedies serve as an eye-opener to us at least in the present crisis.

Therefore it is our duty to rouse the collective will of the people by educating and mobilising public opinion so that our leaders will be deterred from arriving at any dishonourable agreement with the aggressors. Acceptance of cease-fire on our part before driving the enemy out of Tibet would be a grave strategic blunder. Our experience of cease-fire in Kashmir should be a warning to us. Premature cease-fire would only demoralise our army and our people. That would virtually turn their tremendous sacrifice into a sheer waste. If our present leaders cannot continue the national struggle at the necessary high pitch, let them make way for men of stronger mettle. Intelligence and calibre are not the monopoly of a few individuals, however powerful and popular they may be for the present. Bharat, the mother of an immortal race of heroes, has never suffered form any dearth of heroic and competent leaders.

We can tolerate no retreat, no slackening of efforts on our part. If we allow the Chinese to continue to sit tight over our territory we would be allowing them breathing time and offering them a springboard for further expansion. That would jeopardise our national security for all time to come. It is the duty of all of us, therefore, to give caution and courage to our leaders so that they do not slip at this crucial hour, but act as heroic men in keeping with the honour and sovereignty of our country.

Beware Enemy’s Strategy

This caution has become all the more necessary in view of the demoralising effects the Chinese declaration of cease-fire has had upon our people. That is the strategy of the enemy to lull us into a false sense of security, to dampen our enthusiasm and see that our war efforts are slackened; then taking us unawares, to strike again with greater force and capture the whole country.

There is a second factor, which is adversely telling upon the people's morale. So far, all that we have been doing for defence efforts is to collect money. In the beginning, people gave money spontaneously out of their own free will. That was good as it helped to awaken and symbolise the patriotic will of the people. But later on the Government itself has taken up the task of collecting money. The first flush to popular enthusiasm is also waning. Definite and authentic information has come form all over the country that Government machinery is applying various types of pressure to get money form the people. That would be nothing less than extortion. When Government resorts to such pressure tactics then the people will tend to think, "Well, if we are to be threatened thus, what is the difference between our own rule and a foreigner's rule?" This will totally destroy the spontaneity of the people and demoralise them.

Watch word - Economise!

If we are really serious about mobilising our financial resources there are other and healthy ways open to us. The first thing is, now that Emergency is declared, dissolve the State Assemblies for the time being. That would save crores of rupees every year. One single elected Parliament at the Centre can very well satisfy the demands of democracy. Secondly, scrap Prohibition. This does not mean minimising the evil of liquor. Far from it. The demon of wine must be buried deep. There can be no two opinions about it. But the present policy of Prohibition has given rise to many other dangerous social evils, which were not found so for in our country. Persons addicted to liquor are getting it all right but in illicit ways. Then there are persons who carry on this illicit business and a whole host of corrupt officials who profit by the continuation of Prohibition. It is, in fact, these vested interests which desire the continuation of Prohibition. This is corroding the people's morals. It is this moral aspect that makes us say, "Scrap

Prohibition." The evil of drink can be gradually eliminated by proper education and cultivation of healthy habits of recreation and not by legislation. This step will also bring a handsome revenue to the Government.

Further, the immense resources that are required to meet this emergency can he mobilised only by economising on every front to the maximum possible extent. But unfortunately, economy seems to be the last quality of the responsible persons of our country today. Of course, they advise people in general to economise. But form the extravagance they themselves are indulging in, one would feel that they do not really realise that there is any serious threat to our country at all. They are far too busy in consolidating themselves in their present seats of power, in internal rivalries, weeding out their unwanted colleagues, and such other trifles, which leaves them little time to concentrate on things of vital importance for a formidable build-up of defence.

Welcome Criticism

When we speak out all these things our great leaders warn us to desist from criticising them at this hour of crisis. We fail to understand why they should fight shy of honest patriotic criticism. Do they expect us merely to approve all that they are doing as being cent per cent right? Will such flattery serve the interests of the country? If they are really in the right in all their policies and doings then there will be no occasion for others to criticise. And if, on the other hand, they are in the wrong, we are duty-bound to criticise and correct them. They too should listen to and respect the voice of the people in all humility. The very fact that our leaders have become so touchy about criticism indicates that there must be ample scope for criticism!

Suppression of honest will be nothing less than gagging the people's voice reminiscent of the tyrannical rule of a Hitler or a

Stalin. But be it remembered that such despotic rule was short-lived and immediately after their exit history has not spared them and world opinion has totally denounced them. There is one more thing. As persons rise in positions of power, they become all the more exposed to people's gaze and even their slightest failings and lapses are bound to attract people's criticism. Let our leaders take a lesson from England, which passed through the fire of two wars without taking recourse to a single measure to gag the people's voice and kept its civil liberties intact all through.

Recently* our worthy Home Minister said many things against political parties in the Rajya Sabha and subsequently a 'secret' circular was circulated by the Congress that all those who criticise the Government and Pandit Nehru should be treated as traitors. Pandit Nehru has, no doubt, in his reply to Acharya Ranga's letter of objection, said that the expression was improper. But mark, he has only said 'improper' and not 'untrue'! Is this the way of building up a consolidated people's will in the country? Will it not effect a cleavage among the people - Congress on the one side and all the rest on the other? And still it is they who say that others should not criticise but should work for unity! A prominent Congress leader recently said that all other political parties should be put under strict control as otherwise they might gain popularity and make it difficult for the Congress to win the next elections! At this, local Congressman who could not tolerate this view, retorted openly, "If the Chinese come where is the possibility of having next elections at all?"

Let the persons at the helm of affairs cry a halt to all such undemocratic talk. Such talk would be unworthy of a leadership engaged in war. Let them consider themselves as national leaders and not as mere party leaders. Let us all remind ourselves that the only enemy of all of us is China and it ill benefits us to stoop to mutual hostility, suspicion and rivalry. Let us hope that our

leaders will rise to the occasion in setting an example in all such matters that go to build up people's morale.

Danger of Personality Cult

Some people mistake such frank and friendly warnings to our worthy Prime Minister as indicating want of love and respect for him. They are totally wrong. They seem to identify respect with flattery. We respect the Prime Minister and regard him as a great world figure, but we cannot flatter him, or accept him as infallible. That would not also be fair to him. The Communists and such others shout form housetops that we must all strengthen Nehru's hands. Obviously, it is to flatter him and serve their own ulterior ends. But we say, let us strengthen Nehru's heart. If we do that, we will have automatically strengthened his hands.

'Personality cult' is not only foreign to our culture and tradition but will also do infinite damage to national interests. During the Third Battle of Panipat, at one point Sadashivrao Bhau, the Chief Commander of the Hindu forces, changed his seat from an elephant to a horse. The soldiers, failing to see him, thought him dead, got demoralised and broke up. That was because the person of Sadashivrao was the sole point of inspiration and guidance for the army. On the other hand, for twenty years after Shivaji, Maharashtra did not have any acknowledged leader. Sambhaji had been caught, tortured and murdered. Shahu was in Moghul detention. Rajaram was besieged and isolated in Jinji. But everyone fought the war as if the spirit of Swaraj and Shivaji was reborn in him. It became truly a people's war. After twenty years of fighting with them Aurangzeb died, defeated and broken-hearted. Such is the world of difference between personality cult and dedication to an ideal.

The Red Ruse

Thirdly, we should be keenly on the alert about the threat from inside our own country. There are, as we know, quite a number of persons amidst us who welcome Chinese aggression. To them the Chinese are the godfathers and the Chinese army is a 'liberation army'. Some of their top men have openly declared that it is Bharat and not China that is the aggressor. Even now the Communists are carrying on virulent propaganda in the border areas that Bhagawan Sri Krishna has descended on earth in the form of Chou En-Iai to establish 'Dharmarajya' here! They have also collected funds and told the people to preserve the receipt and show them to Chinese when they come so that they will be recoganised as friends. Such a party has been given a clean chit by our Prime Minister as being cent per cent nationalist!

There has been a report that the Communists have tried to indulge in sabotage in Assam. They may try to do the same in various other parts of the country. But strangely enough, they are not kept under strict watch and control. On the other hand, our Government and our people seem to be taken in by their strategy. It is said there is a split in the Communists Party, with pro-Peking and pro-Moscow groups (mind, there is no pro-Bharat group!) bitterly opposed to each other. No one who knows even a bit of the Communist technique will ever believe in that myth. The so-called split is only a trick to dupe the people. Their plan is that one group should bolster up the Prime Minister and his policies so that they can worm themselves into the confidence of the people in general, and behind that mask the other group in secret should go in for collecting arms and getting trained in guerrilla warfare so that in the course of a few months they may be ready to rise in revolt throughout the country, particularly in Assam and Bengal, to break the administration and thus make it easy for the Chinese to run over the entire country. This is actually being done. Training in guerrilla warfare is being given.

The Chinese Puzzle

This gives us the clue to the reason behind the sudden and unexpected cease-fire of the Chinese. They have declared cease-fire when they were actually victorious and thus startled the whole world. A great and amazing feat it was, the victor should voluntarily stop fighting and make a very generous gesture of peace! One theory is that the Chinese imagined that the people of this country so fond of quarreling with one another, would continue their quarrels and dissensions as heretofore and that they (Chinese) would be able to exploit them to conquer the country easily. But to their surprise they found that the whole of the country rose as one man with a grim resolve to throw out the aggressor. This was unexpected to the Chinese. Therefore they thought better of it and discontinued their aggression.

A second theory is that the Chinese did not expect that arms, ammunitions and other types of military help could be flown to Bharat from America and other friendly countries in so short a while. As a matter of fact, we must deeply appreciate the alacrity and efficiency with which American aid was rushed to us. This also took the Chinese aback, and fearing a smashing counter-attack, they desisted form making any further advance.

Some, who are out to praise everything that is Chinese or Russian, say that the Chinese came only to establish their right over the territory, which they claimed to be theirs. They have not accepted the McMohan Line. They say that the actual border is somewhere more to the south. They came up to the border, which they considered to be the right one. In a way they expressed their right and went back. This is giving the Chinese quite an amount of credit.

The Deep Game

However, one fact has been ignored. Sychronising with the aggression of the Chinese, there was a plan for an uprising by the

Communist Party in Bengal. It was to create such wide disturbances that administration would break down, chaos would prevail and the Chinese would be able to take advantage of it to establish themselves from the Himalayas to Calcutta securely. Somehow this plan miscarried. Either because the Communists were not ready, or their hearts failed them at the eleventh hour, or probably because the people became very alert and antagonistic to them, they had no courage to step forward to execute that plan. Whatever the reason, the fact is that they would not, and therefore did not, act up to the expectations of the aggressive Chinese forces. As their plan misfired the Chinese thought they should wait for a more favourable opportunity, and they have therefore discontinued the aggression for the time being. When we piece together this fact with the present strategy of the Communists here, we get a fairly correct and lurid picture of the volcanic menace that is simmering underneath the apparently calm surface of the present Chinese cease-fire.

The Green Danger

The other danger spot in our internal set-up is the powerful Pakistani fifth column entrenched in strategic points all over the country. Various types of lethal weapons are being distributed among the Muslims in the border areas. Probably, they feel that this is a golden opportunity for them to revolt, to bring our leaders to their knees and force them to part with another chunk of land as before. As a matter of fact, when the Chinese overran post after post in NEFA area, the Pakistani elements all over the country were jubilant. They used to exclaim, "You are well served"! They are especially emboldened because of the recent unholy Pak-China alliance. When the people and even the Government officers were vacating Tejpur and other areas, the Muslims alone stayed there saying that a secret understanding had been reached between China and Pakistan to partition Assam between themselves-the northern portion going to China and the southern

portion to Pakistan - and that therefore they were safe. They were fully roused to the frenzy of 1946-47. They raised slogans of 'Pakistan Zindabad', and

"Haske liya Pakistan
Ladke lenge Hindustan"

(*Smiling we got Pakistan, fighting we shall take Hindusthan.*)

They pillaged and looted the vacated Hindu houses and shops. So, it is the duty of all citizens including the well-meaning Muslims to specially beware that such fifth column elements are held in check right from the start and do not get a chance to disturb internal peace and order which is an absolute prerequisite for building up our defences.

The one guiding principle while dealing with all such subversive elements is to treat them on par with the enemy and put them down with an iron hand. There is an extremely instructive episode in the Mahabharata. When King Janamejaya performs the Sarpa-yaga (serpent sacrifice) in revenge for the killing of his father Parikshit by the serpent Takshaka, Takshaka flees and seeks asylum with Indra. Then Janamejaya proceeds to bring down Indra also along with Takshaka into all-consuming fire saying

"Sendraaya Takshakaaya Swaaha"

Such unsparing measures alone will put fear into the hearts of potential agents and allies of the enemy and make them behave as loyal citizens.

Appeasement Whets Appetite

Then we have to consider, especially in the present context, our relations with the neighbouring countries. Here we have to be aware of one factor. When we are in a difficult situation like this, Pakistan-which according to Pandit Nehru was born in hatred and bloodshed-is likely to bully us. And there is also a possibility that our leaders may give more and more in a bid to placate it and make a compromise over Kashmir. Raja and Jayaprakash Narayan have even canvassed that peace must be made with Pakistan at all costs, even by parting with Kashmir if necessary, so as to forge a joint front against China. But will it solve the problem? What does the past history of those elements tell us? Countless were the experiments made to 'win their hearts' by patting their backs and showering concessions upon them. Finally we even gave them parts of our motherland. Even then they were not satisfied. They attacked Kashmir. To please them we gave one-third of Kashmir. We also gave them the waters of canals built at our cost. Over and above it, we gave them nearly eighty-five crores of rupees.

But in return, what have they given us? Under the terms of Partition, they had to give compensation for the immovable property that the Hindus had left behind. The property amounted to hundreds of crores of rupees. But so far we have not received even a single pie. We have been giving everything they demand. But have we ever succeeded in getting anything from them? If we ask them to keep quiet by giving them more and more, will they stop? If now we give Kashmir, then they may ask for Assam and then for Bengal. The more we give the more their appetite gets whetted. So this one-way traffic must stop. The only basis for talks with Pakistan is to tell them, "China is a common danger for both Bharat and Pakistan. If China succeeds neither of us will remain free. Therefore let us stand shoulder to shoulder to face this common powerful foe." This must be the only basis for talks. If we begin to appease them, there will be no end.

Recognise Friends

That brings us to our relations with the Western countries. There is nothing wrong with the policy of non-alignment as such. On the contrary, our folly has been that we were not strictly non-aligned but were oriented more towards the Communist bloc. When England and France attacked Egypt over the Suez affair, we were the first to denounce them in the strongest possible terms. But when China butchered Tibet we did not utter a word of protest. And when Russian tanks rolled into Hungary and crushed its freedom revolt we even tried to justify that act. Had we remained truly non-aligned and pointed out our common devotion to democracy, the West would have looked upon us as a dependable friend. After all, when we were in trouble we looked to them and they rushed to our help. Russia, in spite of all its protestations of friendship for us, sent us the four MIG planes scheduled to be sent earlier, several months after the critical hour had passed. Stranger still, the planes were sent by ship and not by air! So far we have not heard about their having been flown at all. We do not know whether the Government calls these developments as alignment or non-alignment.

Let us hope the Government will take an objective view of the problem and not allow high-sounding slogans and shibboleths to come in the way of arming our nation to the teeth. We must get arms from wherever we can have them. If Germany could buy guns in England on the eve of the First World War and France could sell tanks to Germany on the eve of the Second World War and all the countries opposed to Germany including Russia could receive American military aid during that war, why should we fight shy of taking arms aid from willing countries, whichever they may be?

Fortify Trusted Sentinels

There is an important link on our Northern frontier which we must strengthen. And that is Nepal. Form times immemorial

Nepal has been identified with our national way of life. It is a sovereign State, and we are happy over this fact. It is small in size and it is our duty to see that it is not crushed out of existence. Under pressure from a much bigger power, China, Nepal has accepted in its moments of weakness the proposal for the Lhasa - Kathmandu Road. It is our duty to see that the independence and sovereignty of Nepal are preserved. Both of us are facing a common danger. We must respect Nepal's sovereignty and create confidence in its mind about our bona fides. Its rebels have sought shelter in our territory. This has been causing much heart-burning in Nepal. It has given rise to a virulent anti-Bharat propaganda in that State. We must restrain these rebels and re-establish the ties of traditional friendship.

Let the defence of our sacred motherland be the first criterion of all our policies-internal and external. For that, if it becomes necessary to cross our frontiers let us do it without the least hesitation. Today the Dalai Lama is in our midst. Tibetans are still offering stiff resistance to Chinese forces in their country. This is a factor in our favour for the liberation of Tibet. Let the Dalai Lama set up his own Ã©migrÃ© Government and declare the independence of Tibet. Let us give him all necessary support in carrying on the struggle for his country's freedom. Without a free and friendly Tibet, all our Northern defences become merely mockery. But our Prime Minister says that such a step would be 'manifest nonsense' we cannot understand why he should be opposed to such a noble cause-a cause in support of the independence of a down-trodden people and which is a pre-eminent requisite for our national security. In fact, our late revered President Dr. Rajendra Prasad had said that we cannot hope to protect our frontiers unless we carry the war into the enemy's territory and for that, liberation of Tibet is the first military step.

The Right Philosophy

In order that we may mobilise our entire internal resources and liquidate all types of internal forces of subversion and fight till the enemy is completely vanquished and the yellow scourge erased from the face of the earth, the one great and inexhaustible storehouse of power that we have to build up is the sterling national character of the people. Without that, any amount of external aid and equipment will be of no avail.

The Real Threat

We know that in the defeat of the democratic forces in China and victory of the Communist rebels, one of the most decisive factors was the 'characterlessness' of the democratic forces. America tried its best to protect that democracy. They helped it with millions of dollars and huge quantities of arms and ammunition of the latest type to equip the army so that it may deal effectively with the Communist revolt. But history tells us that even officers in the army, for the paltry gain of a few chips, sold the American arms to the rebels, with the result that they became very well equipped and the nationalist army was defeated.

Nearer home, there are countless such instances of characterlessness. To cite an instance, it is widely known that Pakistanis are hatching a conspiracy in Assam. Many Pakistanis from East Bengal have infiltrated and are still infiltrating into Assam. They have settled down there. This is a conspiracy to make Assam a Muslim-majority area and later join it to Pakistan. But our Government is not willing to face this fact. It has not opened its eyes even though we have been sounding a note of alarm from as far back as 1950. Now it asks, "How to recognise those Pakistanis?" Some persons in Assam came forward and prepared a list of all the Pakistanis who had illegally entered in recent years, with their names, addresses, etc., and submitted it to the Government. The Government appointed an officer to go into that list and report his findings. He made enquiries. His report

was: "This list is all false. Only a very few have come from Pakistan." Why did he report in that way? It came to be known later that he had taken a huge bribe.

Lord Attlee, the reputed Labour leader of England, has said in an article that the Government machinery in our country has become corrupt to the core. It is in such countries, he says, that the Communists succeed in subversion. He had asked a prominent person of one of the Asian countries whether there was any threat of Communist subversion in their country, to which that person gave the significant reply, "Our administration is not corrupt and therefore we have no such fear." This warning, coming from an eminent statesman of a mature nation, must make us pause and ponder over this fatal internal corrosion.

The Basic Malady

Thus, crisis of character is a very serious affair. We have to grapple with it, not merely by words or by criticising others but by going to its very roots. Mere criticism will take us nowhere. If we call X, Y, or Z names, how it is going to correct our behaviour? On the contrary, it will give us an additional bad quality of calling others names. How then can we eradicate this demon of immorality from ourselves?

It is well known that a person becomes immoral and corrupt to the extent his selfishness gets the upper in his life. The greater the selfishness, the more a person is prone to take recourse to unseemly methods for fulfilling his self-interest. It a man is unselfish, he will never go in for evil and his character will never suffer. He will be an honest man.

Today selfishness has grown. Every man wants something more than what he gets. He does not care whether the way in which he gets it is good or bad. Often it is bad, and therefore there is crisis

of character. So we have to control the selfishness of man. This is an extremely difficult job. Constituted as we are, some little selfishness is bound to be there. We are not all sadhus. We have not given up our families, wearing only a koupinam. It is not possible for us. So far as the whole society is concerned, that will not also be conducive to welfare of the society. A little selfishness will remain, to maintain our body and our family and to give them a minimum of happiness compatible with modern times. Let us not, therefore, think ill of any person who desires to lead an ordinarily comfortable life. But then that is the limit. If a person goes beyond that and indulges in selfishness to the detriment of the interests of the people as a whole, then certainly it is reprehensible.

Morality from Top Downwards

How to control self-interest from running amuck? Suppose we advise all people and give them lectures, will it do? Will Sadachar Samitis and mass pledges in public achieve that miracle? Mere lectures on morality and pledges have never corrected people's morals. Further, many persons who lecture on morality and administer pledges are such that we should not look into THEIR lives!

Once I met a Sadhu. He told me that he was giving lectures to the clerks and other lower staff in Government offices on 'character', on how not to be corrupt and so on. I said, "But, how will you succeed in your mission? You advise a chaprasi who may be taking a bribe of a few paise. Can you not realise that the chaprasi is a poor man unable even to feed all members of his family twice a day? If in that condition, he stoops to taking a little bribe, we can only pity him, though of course we cannot justify his action. So go higher up, lecture to those at the top. See if they can be corrected." Then the Sadhu said, "But the higher-ups are good!"

I said, "I shall give you an example. There is a gentleman in the galaxy of our political leaders, who is adored and loved by the country. Once on the eve of the last elections, he was invited to a city to be presented with a purse for the purpose of elections. A number of big businessmen and industrialists had formed a committee and collected a big sum of money. At a grand function, with all those speeches extolling the person and the party, they offered him the purse. He got up to reply. He said, "I know that all these people that have assembled here are indulging in black-marketing and the money they have offered me is born out of sin. It is sinful even to touch it. I feel that all such should be flogged publicly and even hanged!' All this he spoke in a very high moral tone, but quietly pocketed the purse and went away!" Fortunately, the Sadhu also knew this incident. Then I told him, "Go to such high-up and correct them first."

If the top men are morally upright, then morality will trickle down to the lowest stratum of society and general good character will be the result. You cannot build character from the bottom to top. It has always to be built up at the top first. On the other hand, physical comforts have to be provided starting from the bottom. Feed those who are at the lowest rung of the ladder of our social life, who are physically working hard day and night and leading an existence, which is certainly an insult to the dignity of the society. Let the people at the top go without a meal, I don't mind. But that is how society should be rebuilt and revitalised - physical needs from the bottom upwards and morality form the top downwards.

The Living Ideal

It is a matter of common experience that character and morality are wanting even in the very high strata of our national life. Those in the higher strata of life are intelligent and educated. They know what is morality and what is immorality. They can even deliver

excellent sermons on the subject. Then, what are we going to achieve merely by advising such persons?

Can we improve the moral standards of our people by taking recourse to legislation? Take the case of Prohibition. It is in force in many states. But in all those States, illicit distillation has become a flourishing cottage industry! Hence, mere legislation is a useless instrument for bettering the morals.

In fact, there is only one way by which selfishness can be restrained. Give the man an ideal to work for, to live for and die for. Then that person, in his devotion to that ideal, will be able to control the pulls of his self-interest and build up a better character. There is no other way. Give the people an ideal, high and holy, an ideal, which naturally resonates in their hearts, throbs in their blood and which has been with them for generations. Then even the ordinary man in the street will be able to feel the rise of devotion and character in him. Such an inspiring ideal is the realisation of the glory and greatness of our scared Hindu Rashtra.

"I am a child of this great Hindu nation. For generations, my great forefathers have striven to make this the greatest and noblest nation - an ideal nation of ideal men - on the face of the earth. I, too, will live and strive for the same goal." - This is the natural impulse that we have inherited. We feel it in our blood. If this natural sublime urge is roused then our people will be able to rise above their selfish pulls and manifest chaste national character in their day-to-day life.

The Vision that Inspires

Even in the present times of national crisis we cannot afford to ignore this content of idealism. Let us not forgot that it was on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, when war-drums were beating,

trumpets were blowing and Arjuna was standing in the centre of the two armies, that Sri Krishna taught him the eternal and inspiring message of selfless action in the cause of dharma and spurred him to matchless valour and victory. It is only when a hero is inspired with the vision of an ideal that he will be able to put forth the best in him. He should be clear in his mind about the life values for which he is to fight and die, if need be. Talk of economic plans and industrial glory cannot stir the people to suffer and sacrifice. Dry and disparaging descriptions of our motherland as 'snow-bound', 'unfit for human habitation', 'not a blade of grass growing there', etc., will only kill the spirit of the people who will then see no difference even if such a piece of land is occupied by the enemy. So it is absolutely essential that the eternal and inspiring call of devotion to our holy motherland and our national ideals is engraved in the heart of every son of this soil.

All our valiant freedom fighters in the past and in modern times were inspired with the living vision of Hindu Rashtra. That was the only effective rallying cry to rouse our masses to action from one corner of the country to the other. And whenever that vision was blurred or lost sight of, the people too relapsed into inactivity and servility.

The lesson of the 1857 War of Independence is before us. The great leaders of that revolution, at the very first stroke, captured Delhi and released the Moghul Badshah who had become a mere tool in the hands of the British. They reinstated him on the throne as the free Emperor and declared him the leader of the War of Independence in a bid to mobilise the support of those sections of the people who still owed loyalty to the Delhi throne. But this step made the Hindu masses suspect that the atrocious Moghul rule, which was smashed by the heroic efforts and sacrifices of Guru Govind Singh, Chhatrasal, Shivaji and such others would once again be revived and foisted on them. And that, they felt,

would be a greater tragedy than the English rule. The Hindu mind, which was inspired with the hope of Hindu Swaraj looking at the great Hindu generals like Nanasaheb Peshwa, Tatya Tope, Rani Lakshmibai and Rana Kunvar Singh lost its urge to fight. Historians say that this was one of the decisive factors, which ultimately led to the collapse of that revolution.

It is only when the people are inspired with this age-old national vision that it is possible to make them rise to heights of selflessness, sacrifice and heroism and to forge them into a single living national entity from one end of the land to the other and build up an unassailable national strength. And when we do that, we will be able to humble not one but ten Chinas!

Dreamers Wake Up

One more serious impediment that we have to clear up is our mental reservation regarding building up of national strength. The very idea of strength was an anathema to our leaders all these days. The mental climate of our leadership was somehow averse to it. They believed entirely in pious platitudes. Even recently some of our responsible leaders indulged in talks of unilateral disarmament which would be nothing but unilateral suicide! At least since 1954 our leaders have been aware, on their own admission, of the fact of the naked aggression of the Chinese. But they continued to live in the dreamland of Panchsheel. During these eight years we could have equipped ourselves very well and made our defences impregnable. But today we are having a small army, fewer arms and still fewer bullets. Production of bombers, fighter planes, tanks, military transport, etc., was totally neglected. There is not one anti-aircraft gun of sufficient range with us. And we are talking of disarmament! How can we disarm when we have no arms at all?

We have read in papers that our ordnance factories manufactured coffee crushers and plastic bags. They also produced a truck with a capacity less than that of even an ordinary truck and called it 'Shaktiman'! And the very first sample of 'Shaktiman' collapsed at its first trial! But now it seems our leaders have learnt a lesson at the cost of so many precious lives of our soldiers. Our Prime Minsiter has frankly confessed that China awakened us to a world of reality form a dreamland of our own creation. At one place he gave expression to his new realisation saying, "We cannot survive without strength. If it comes to that we will fight even with lathis." And our Home Minister Sri Lal Bahadur Shastri said, " We will no more be caught napping." Which only means that they were napping till now! It is some solace that, though late, they have realised the truth that strength alone counts in this world of conflict and that the world understands only the language of strength. Let us pray to God that their present realisation will not be short-lived.

As a matter of fact this is an elementary principle of life which our ancients had realised long, long ago. Manusmriti says:

“Dandasya hi bhayaat sarvam
Jagat bhogaaya kalpate”

(*It is out of the fear of sceptre -a symbol of authority- that society is sustained.*) And they lived in the light of that truth. Though they preached and practised the highest philosophy of human brotherhood, they never ignored the hard realities of the world in which they had to live and move. Sometimes we hear our leaders say that traditionally we have always been a peace-loving and non-violent people. True, but it was not the peace at the cost of honour, it was not the peace of the grave. In fact, passive submission to belligerence was looked down upon as a sign of unmanliness. We had in the past set up standards of valour and heroism and produced some of the greatest generals and conquerors the world has ever known, who fought and killed and

carried on fierce battles relentlessly to establish peace wherein dharma reigned, supreme.

Philosophy of Suicide

We are really amazed that even at this critical hour, there are eminent personalities who continue to think and preach in the same old strain. Even now they argue, "We are a people of peace and non-violence. If the Chinese come, we will only stand before them as a peace army. What will they do? After all, it requires two to fight. If we do not fight, then with whom will they fight?" A good argument indeed, especially appealing to those who have not sufficient guts to fight!

It is true that two are required for a fight. But it is not necessary that both should be fighters. It is sufficient if one strikes and the other receives the blow! And again, if we remain peaceful and behave well with others, is it a necessary corollary that others also will behave likewise with us? Is it our experience of the world?

Fate of Unilateral Goodness

Take our own example. When Islam was first born, the King of Gujrat came to know from traders that a new faith had arisen in Arabia. He felt curious to know what it was and asked his traders to bring some of the learned men of that faith in order to know more about it. Some moulvis came to Gujrat. Our pandits held discussions with them. They found that it was a faith that inspired man to pray to God, though it had no philosophy as such. Therefore the pandits and the King said, "it does not matter if you have no philosophy. If you can guide the individual to pray to God; your faith is good. We wish well of it. Let all the people of Arabia go Godward on account of this great new faith that your founder Pygamber has propagated." That is, we respected the faith, the moulvis and the founder. We did not say that it was

some trash, which had to be destroyed. No Hindu will ever say that.

There is the other instance. In the South, in the kingdom of Madurai, there was an Arab Muslim merchant. As he was a person of good character and great qualities, the king made him his minister. Even today, some Muslims have been made ministers. But that is done with an eye on the Muslim vote! That was not the consideration before the king, because he did not depend upon the votes of Muslims to bolster him up! The Muslim gentleman was made a minister only out of respect for qualities of the man. We have thus behaved with Muslims with respect, love and fraternal affection.

But, how did they reciprocate? Their history of the past one thousand two hundred years, full of incidents of destruction, depredation and all sorts of barbaric atrocities, is there before our eyes. The present-day large Muslim population in our country is one of the results of the fatal devastation that they wrought all over the land. Not only the broken monuments but these pieces of a broken society also are equally an evidence of their vandalism. What has our good behaviour towards the Muslim faith and the Muslim people brought us? Nothing but desecration of our holy places and enslavement of our people.

Face the Reality

Take the case of China. For more than two thousand years, ever since the Buddhist influence entered China, there has been a regular intercourse of learned men and a sort of fraternisation. Our modern leaders also picked up the same thread, as it were, and raised the slogan of "Hindi Chini Bhai Bhai'. They pursued this policy even to the extent of renouncing our moral responsibility in the case of Tibet. We renounced it, and in a way offered Tibet on a platter to the all-grabbing China. We have

really proved faithless to Tibet. In fact, China did not turn faithless to us, as there was never any question of putting our faith in them. On the other hand, it is we who have betrayed the trust that Tibet had reposed in us. We committed a great sin. God only knows how we can atone for it! We committed this sin only to call China 'Bhai'. To this extent we made fraternisation with China. How has it responded to our fraternal attitude? By attacking our frontiers! Such a one-sided good behaviour in this matter-of fact world does not seem to yield any fruits.

Let us now turn to the character of the Chinese and see whether it is true that they will not cut us down as grass if we just keep quiet, as some say. When the present Communist Government came to power in China, they massacred many people in order to eliminate opposition to their rule. As reported in those days, the number of people they liquidated was about ninety-six lakhs. Can any man in his senses believe that if a Government, which is headed by people who in order to slake their thirst for power can indulge in the massacre of their own countrymen to the tune of about one crore, sends its armies into our country, those armies will go back without killing us just because we refuse to fight?

We have to realise that in order to meet all such brutal challenges of this world and come out victorious, strength- solid invincible national strength- alone can help us.

Sources of Soldiers Strength

In all such grave crises our armies will have to be there in the forefront to bear the burnt cheerfully and courageously. And especially, the incomparable valour and bravery of our soldier on the battlefield fills our heart with confidence, pride and joy. But when such a soldier looks back, what should he see? Should he see a disintegrated and unpatriotic people, all indulging in their own selfishness and scramble for power? If this is what the

soldier sees, will he be inspired to fight and lay down his life? Let him see a consolidated and patriotic people behind him. Let him feel the confidence that whatever the army requires, this steel willed and well-organised people from Kashmir to Kanyakumari is ever ready to fulfil it. If men are required, men will be forthcoming. If various other necessary items are to be supplied there, they will come inspite of any hardship that the people may be put to. With the confidence that the whole of the people is backing him, every soldier will feel that his strength, his fortitude and his capability to fight has become hundredfold, and he will come out victorious.

Strength Begets Friends

It is only when we acquire the strength to stand firm in the face of adversity that friends also will rush to our aid. Why should they help if we ourselves are unfit and not firm enough to stand? Even if they want to help, how and whom should they help? Even now, when we made a feeble attempt to stand on our own legs we got help from so many quarters. Help came from America about whom our leaders rarely said a kind word. Help came from Britain though we had bitterly criticised them over the Suez affair. Help came from West Germany and many other countries. Let us at least now have a word of gratitude for them.

A Blessing, but When?

In view of so many healthy trends set in motion in our national life by the Chinese invasion, we often hear that it has been a blessing in disguise. It is a fact that foreign aggression affords a golden opportunity for nation to purge itself of corroding tendencies like selfishness, internecine feuds, separatist pulls, etc., and to recast itself into single unified and purified entity. The sense of imminent danger spurs the individuals in the nation to rise above all other petty feelings, to merge their interests in the

supreme national good and stand as living limbs of a colossal national personality. But all this can be achieved and made enduring only if we have the will, the wisdom to grasp the great chance offered to us and capacity to profit from it. Without that preparation on our part even the blessing may prove to be a mere shock and waste and nothing more.

Once the goddess of wealth, Lakshmi, appeared before a beggar, blessed him and asked him to receive a shower of gold. But she told him that the gold would turn into dust if it touched the ground. The beggar eagerly opened his bag holding it with both his hands. The goddess filled the bag with gold sufficient to keep his family in affluence for generations to come. But the beggar was greedy and requested her to put a handful of gold more. The goddess showered one more handful and disappeared. But the bag gave way because of the weight, all the gold fell on the ground and immediately turned to dust! One requires worth and strength even to make use of the blessings of the Almighty.

Tending the Roots

So also is the case of nations when blessed with foreign aggression. It is here that the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh comes up to play the role of creating the necessary will and competence in our people to turn this difficulty into an opportunity. The Sangh has been straining every nerve and fibre to rouse and mobilise jan-shakti by imparting life giving ideals, qualities and character required for a powerful, positive and perennial national life. We are confident that every Swayamsevak of our organisation will be found in the forefront when the hour for peoples action and sacrifice comes. At the same time, we do not want to come forward as a group because in times of war there is no necessity of any priesthood of any group or party. It would also be highly improper to parade ones sacrifices and sufferings. Because to offer ones all, even his dearest possessions,

at the alter of motherland is the first and foremost duty of every son of this soil. And it is that life-spirit that we have been inculcating in the people through the Sangh since its very inception.

25. Nation At War

Call of a New Era

The recent war with Pakistan (Pakistani aggression in August 1965). has as if electrified the entire length and breadth of our land and inspired the hearts and minds of millions of our countrymen with a new purpose and a new confidence as nothing else had done during the last eighteen years after the quitting of the British.

Self-Respect, Nation's Life-Breath

Ever since the Britishers quit this land we had been subject to growing depredations and inroads by Pakistan on the one hand and China on the other. Times without number we had to gulp down insult and humiliations at their hands. And, especially the ignominious defeat that we suffered at the hands of the Chinese in 1962 was corroding the people's morale. Serious doubts and apprehensions had begun to creep into people's mind whether our country was capable at all of protecting its integrity and sovereignty from the onslaughts of the aggressor. People's hearts were wrung with agony to see our great nation thus becoming an object of pity and ridicule in the eyes of the world.

No wonder the present experience of being able to deal a crushing blow to the aggressor; to be victorious and be able even to launch a successful counter-offensive has breathed new life into the drooping spirits of the nation. The nation's pulse has been quickened by an unprecedented upsurge of patriotic pride and self-respect. Verily this is the first and the foremost lesson that the war has taught us. The spirit of national honour and self-respect - swabhimana - is the life-breath of nation's freedom - swatantrya.

That is the source from which we can tap the inexhaustible potentialities of our nation. The all-round resurgence that we witness today is because we have decided to stand up in vindication of the freedom and honour of our sacred motherland. It has touched the inmost chord of our national being and brought forth the human element of this land in its pristine glory.

Potent Men vs. Patton Tanks

It has once again given glowing evidence for the irresistible valour and virility of the children born and bred in the bosom of our great motherland. The way our jawans crushed scores of Patton Tanks, considered invincible, as so many empty match-boxes and reduced the much-vaunted armoured divisions of the enemy to a shambles has made many, even its Western masters, sit up and ponder. They have set up an 'experts committee' to go into the causes of the debacle that their arms (and their prestige too!) suffered. But they have ignored the simple fact that in the final analysis, it is the 'man' and not the 'machine' that counts. Our superior 'man' has proved to be far superior to the superior machine of the enemy. I for one never had any doubt about the supreme quality of our men. How can they be otherwise, being the children of those chaste and death-defying women who chose to immolate themselves willingly in the flames of jowhar rather than allow the enemies to touch them?

A Myth Exploded

Not only is physical heroism but in skill and strategy as well, our army has displayed its traditional excellence and made shortwork of all the aggressive designs of the enemy. Many were surprised to see our armies crossing the cease-fire line and the so-called international border and marching into the territory under enemy's control in Lahore and other sectors. They expected that our armies

would fight a defensive war remaining within our own borders. But no one who knows the first principles of war strategy will allow one's own territory to be turned into a theatre of war and invite devastation. The battle for the freedom and integrity of the country has always to be fought deep inside the aggressor's camp. That is the essence of a successful war strategy. Truly has it been said, "Offence is the best form of defence". Our armies could bring laurels of victory to our country and cover themselves with undying glory solely because they have followed this time-honoured dictum.

Our jawans have in these few days smashed the myth assiduously built up by the British, and believed by the world and by many of our own countrymen, that we are a meek and weak lot who have always been at the mercy of any and every freebooter who chose to trample upon us. It was this myth that made even Gandhiji remark,"An average Hindu is a coward and an average Muslim is a bully." However, facts are otherwise. The bully is invariable a coward at heart. It is only when he finds the circumstances safe that he indulges in savage brutalities. To a Hindu, however, the ideal is Vajradapi kathorani, mruduni kusumadapi. He is softer than a petal in promoting brotherliness and amicable friendship, but can become harder than a diamond when the other person turns down his hand of fraternity and prepares to strike him. In fact, no society, which could give birth to a Rama, a Krishna, a Pratap, a Shivaji and a Ranjit Singh could be considered as anything but virile and valiant. A distorted presentation of our national history depicting all such great national heroes as either mythological or as only local chieftains and naming only some sections of our people as martial races had so far misrepresented the true heroic ring of our national character. Our valiant jawans have given the lie direct to that mischievous propaganda and proved that every son of the soil inherits the blood of those peerless ancestors. They have projected before the world the real

mighty image of Bharat Mata with Her millions of arms raised to strike down evil forces on the face of the earth.

Let us pay our grateful homage to all those noble martyrs in all ranks of our great army who by their valour and self-sacrifice have brought this great day for our country. Let not this moment be one of sorrow over their death. Those who have fought and sacrificed their lives on battlefield are bound to reach the highest state of bliss hereafter. Why then should anyone feel sorry for such a glorious martyrdom? On the contrary, their sacred memory should be a constant inspiration for all of us to imbibe their spirit of supreme self-sacrifice and burning resolve in the cause of safeguarding the freedom of our holy motherland.

The Unsung Saga

The way even the common man in those border areas has reacted to the enemy's challenge is no less inspiring. The people there stuck to their places. The story of heroic young men working untiringly day and night as a second line of defence, of hundreds of truck drivers in complete disregard of danger to their lives rushing right up to the front the necessary articles to our jawans, their endless toil, suffering and even death - 'unsung, unwept and unhonoured' - is a saga that can adorn the finest leaf of any war literature. About them, an army officer feelingly remarked, "We, the army men, have at least the consolation that if we die our names will shine as martyrs and the Government will give pensions to our families. But these civilians standing shoulder to shoulder with us and facing the enemy bullets have none of these prospects. Verily their spirit of self-sacrifice has excelled ours."

Leadership in New Shape

The reason why our Government could key the pitch of nation's morale to such inspiring heights is because of the healthy change

that has come over their policies vis-Ã -vis the aggressor, from one of surrender to one of self-respect. The entire nation is filled with pride and joy at their grit and manliness. Our Prime Minister's firm stand, in the face of various pressures from UNO and other powerful countries, not to compromise our national freedom and honour, and his resolute reply to the Chinese 'three-day ultimatum' that we will not be cowed down by such threats but will fight with all our might, has steeled the nation's heart.

National Self-Interest, the Guideline

The second lesson that has been brought home to us is that in order to protect our national freedom and honour the one supreme guideline for all our national policies, internal as well as external, should be enlightened national self-interest. The present experience has proved to the hilt that no other factor - neither high-sounding slogans nor the 'goodwill' of world bodies nor even the 'friendship' of other countries - will come to our rescue and that we alone will be called upon to bear the full brunt in protecting our freedom. All our policies hereafter must be recast in that new light.

Let us consider our relations with Pakistan from this angle. Now, our Government has agreed to a cease-fire in anticipation of an honourable and lasting settlement with that intractably hostile neighbour. The firmness of our Government in staying on the line our valiant forces have reached with so much sacrifice is indeed reassuring. The line of actual control should be confirmed as the line of cease-fire. That is how the UNO itself had decided the cease-fire line when Pakistan had aggressed into Kashmir in 1947. We should unequivocally tell the UNO to apply the same yardstick as it had applied then. The question of withdrawing even an inch from our present positions simply does not arise.

However, I feel our army should have been allowed to press forward in its victorious march and capture Lahore, Rawalpindi, Karachi and liberate the whole of Kashmir by the time U Thant came to Delhi and before agreeing to cease-fire. Then our position would have been immensely stronger and matters would have straightened out as they ought to have been. Our national prestige also would have shot up much higher.

Clarity in Objectives

During the present struggle, we often find our policy-makers at the centre declaring that our purpose is only to destroy the 'war-potential' of the enemy and not to occupy his territory. Today, doubtless, our armies have given a smashing blow to Pakistan's war-machine. The enemy tanks, jets and radars have been pounded. But Pakistan is bound to make up its losses and rearm itself. For, 'war-potential', as meaning the store of arms and ammunition, is a thing that can be rebuilt any number of times.

The 'war-potential' of Germany, for example, was completely destroyed during the First World War. But within a mere couple of decades Germany again built up its terrible war-machine and plunged the world in the Second World War.

In the present case, Pakistan's war-potential is entirely a gift from countries like America and England, which find in Pakistan a willing pawn in their overall global military strategy. We are already reading in papers that arms and ammunition are being rushed to Pakistan from Turkey, Iran and such other countries, which are obviously acting only as indirect channels for the flow of American arms to that country. The destruction of Paksitan's war-potential would, in the circumstances, mean destroying the combined war-potential of America and England. The impracticability of such a proposition is quite obvious.

Strike at the Root

Further, the policy of 'destroying the war-potential' ignores a basic fact of human nature. A person does not indulge in violence or aggression merely because he is armed but because he is driven by an evil propensity. And as long as that evil propensity persists, he is bound to arm himself again and again and prove a menace to the welfare of others. The history of aggressive nations the world over only bears out this truth.

Now, how is the evil propensity to be eliminated? We often hear our present-day leaders saying that we have no quarrel with 'evil men' as such, but with only their 'evil mentality'. But, 'evil mentality' is not something, which is tangible, which can be caught hold of and destroyed. The evil propensities invariably manifest themselves in the form of an evil person or group of such persons. And it becomes inevitable that in order to eradicate evil we should do away with its supports, i.e., those evil men. If separation of evil nature from man was possible, Sri Rama would have destroyed only the evil propensity in Ravana - for whose other virtues he had the highest regard - all allowed him to live a good life! And again, there would have been no need for Sri Krishna to kill Kamsa or make the Pandavas slay the Kauravas. But that did not happen.

As the story goes, when Rama was cutting off the heads of the ten-headed Ravana and breaking up his bows one after another, i.e., his "war-potential", he would grow another head and take up another bow and resume fighting as before. It was only when Rama struck at Ravana's heart-the seat of his evil nature - that the Rakshasa was laid low and his dreaded evil reign came to an end. The story is a reminder of the hard fact of this world that it is inevitable to annihilate the support - the evil persons - if we have to do away with evil.

Redeem Pledge of Complete Independence

However, this does not mean that we are coveting other's land. For, 'Pakistan' is surely not a foreign land to us. 'Pakistan' is only a recent creation of political machinations. Since times immemorial, those areas have formed integral parts of our motherland. It was on the banks of the sacred Ravi at Lahore that Congress, under the Presidentship of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, pledged itself to achieve complete independence of the country. How then can the hoisting of our flag in Lahore and other parts of Pakistan be interpreted as coveting others land? In fact, our fight for independence can be deemed to have come to a successful close only when we liberate all those areas now under enemy occupation.

Immediately we say this, there are many who feel aghast and exclaim, "What will happen to the Muslims residing there?" but they forget that this is not a religious war between Hindus and Muslims. Ayub Khan is, in fact, tyrannising over his own co-religionists, especially in NWFP, Baluchistan and East Bengal, and has reduced them to second-class citizens. The people of NWFP and their leader Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan have always been with Bharat. They were forced to join Pakistan much against their will. The Bengali Muslims in East Bengal, groaning under the heels of Punjabi Muslims who dominate the entire State machinery in Pakistan, are already in revolt.

Reunification of those parts with Bharat would therefore be a welcome development and an act of liberation for them. They may well be Muslims by religion but they can live happily as honourable citizens just as the other Muslims here who are enjoying all the rights and privileges due to a citizens, in the single, democratic and unified Bharat. History bears testimony to the fact that Bharat, the cradle-land of religious generosity, has always welcomed and assured all religious groups a free,

honourable and secure life. Even in the Vijaynagar and Maratha empires, which rose to defend our national freedom from Muslim onslaughts, Muslims were stationed in some of the highest positions of trust and responsibility.

UNO in True Colours

While pursuing our national objectives, the one deceptive pitfall that we have to avoid is attaching undue importance to what the so-called world bodies will say. All such 'world bodies' and 'world opinions' stand thoroughly exposed in their true colours today. The UNO and the Commonwealth have proved to be blatantly partial towards Pakistan. They have only repeated the ignoble role they played in 1948 of equating the aggressor with the aggressed. That the UNO is only an arena of power politics for the big powers has been proved once again. The UNO, which did not so much as open its lips when Pakistan sent its armed saboteurs inside Kashmir in thousands or even when it marched its armies across the international boundary into Bharat in Chhamb-Jaurian sector, suddenly become conscious of 'danger to world peace' when our armies, as a defence-measure, marched into Lahore sector in Pakistan! There is no doubt that if, by chance, Pakistan had succeeded in its aggressive designs, the UNO or the other powers which are now shouting in the name of world peace, would have then coolly slept over the whole affair. Probably, America and England had even fondly hoped that their stooge Pakistan would have an easy walkover and within a matter of days capture Delhi itself.

Even in future, Pakistan may well attempt to send infiltrators and UNO cannot be expected to behave better than heretofore. No sane man, much less the policy-makers of our country, can repose an iota of trust in UNO, which has proved itself so utterly unworthy of the august name it bears. The total disregard for truth and justice - nay, the active connivance with the aggressor -

which this body has exhibited is unbecoming in the extreme. Having shut its eyes to the glaring fact of the eighteen-year-old aggression by Pakistan, the UNO has verily forfeited its right to speak in the name of peace and justice.

The Rule of Friendship

The policy of America in trying to bolster up a barbarous theocratic military dictatorship as against the biggest secular democracy and the most peace-loving country in the world is deplorable in the extreme. The way our Western 'friends' in general have behaved towards us and even Russia which has so far kept mum and not condemned Pakistan as an aggressor, has only proved that it is because we had remained weak all these years we stand friendless in the world today. For, the weak are always a liability and a burden and not an asset to their friends. Naturally, the strong do not desire the friendship of the weak except to exploit the latter. Once we become powerful and decide to pursue all policies so as to suit our enlightened national self-interest backed by a strong-willed five-hundred-million-strong nation, then all those nations which are now siding with Pakistan in the hope of keeping down Bharat with its help and establishing their influence in both the weak countries, will in their own interest be forced to align themselves with Bharat.

Proving the Fact

Even now the will and nerve that we displayed a little in sticking to the path of national interest has set the doubting Thomases and the imperialistic intriguers in the world to think afresh over the Kashmir issue. For our part, so far as the constitutional requirements are concerned, Kashmir's integration with Bharat was complete and final when the Maharaja of Kashmir signed the Instrument of Accession and the National Conference, the people's representative body there, fully endorsed it. The

argument is often advanced that we did not care for the same constitutional propriety of the ruler's approval while integrating Hyderabad and Junagarh with Bharat. Though it is a fact that the Muslim Nawabs of these States were opposed to merger in Bharat, the people there were wholly in favour of it. They were, in fact, in revolt against the rulers. But, in the case of Kashmir, as already noted, not only the Maharaja but the entire people through their representative body had unequivocally declared their wish to join Bharat. So, viewed from whatever aspect, Kashmir's integration with Bharat is irrevocable and no longer negotiable.

We should therefore firmly tell the mediating powers that the only question that remains is the vacation by Pakistan of its aggression from parts of Kashmir, which it had illegally and forcibly occupied in 1947. We should not enter into any other discussions, not even seeking an assurance from the UNO that there will not be any further aggression by Pakistan. In the past all such assurances have been found to be meaningless. Even in the present, the UNO has, in spite of all its solemn assurances, failed to check the armed infiltrators or the regular army of Pakistan from entering Kashmir. And if for implementing its assurance in future the stationing of foreign troops is implied, then there cannot be anything more disgraceful for a great country like ours than to allow foreign troops to be stationed on our soil for the protection of our boundaries. To exhibit any sign of slackening of will at this hour and allow once again the foreign powers to play their dirty game of power politics would seriously affect the splendid morale of our people and undo all the beneficial effects that have accrued to us by the limitless suffering and self-sacrifice of our jawans on the battlefield. We should not lose on the diplomatic front what we have gained on the military front.

In this connection, I feel our Prime Minister ought not to have consented to go to Tashkent for talks, because Russia, by calling Bharat and Pakistan together, has put the aggressor and the victim

of aggression on the same footing. After all, what is there to talk? With Pakistan continuing in its bellicose mood and trying to impose a solution by force, what useful purpose can be served by talking to them? Until and unless Pakistan accepts the fact that Kashmir is an integral part of Bharat, nothing can come out of such talks. Or if something does come out it will only be adverse to our interests.

Settle Once for All

The danger of a fresh attack by Pakistan is still there. It is now busy trying to turn the present cease-fire into a camouflage and augment its forces. It has known, though at a heavy price, our weapons, military strategy, our strength and our weaknesses. It is bound to take a lesson from the present experience, make up all its deficiencies and prepare itself for a more powerful and better planned attack. War-mongering nations have always utilised the recess after a war to prepare for a much bigger further war. In fact Pakistan is already fast replenishing its losses in arms. It is continuing in its aggressive posture and violating the cease-fire line with impunity. It has occupied hundreds of square miles of our territory after the cease-fire. Killing of our people, lifting our cattle, cutting of crops, sniping and shelling are going on unabated. This is a situation insulting to us in the extreme. It is intolerable. It should not be allowed to hang on like this for long. There should be some finality about it. The issue should be decided once for all.

Welcome Bigger War

Let us not be unnecessarily alarmed about the evil combination of China and Pakistan. We can most certainly bring to knees both the aggressors. Our army is in excellent fighting trim. Their morale is splendid. Indeed it would have been highly desirable if China had followed up its ultimatum and invaded our country.

That would have given our fighting forces a golden opportunity to make China lick the dust and to wash off the stigma of defeat and dishonour attached to our name in our last encounter with China. The world would then have witnessed the supreme heights of our Bharatiya heroism, for what fun is there in merely fighting a petty power like Pakistan?

On the international front too, such a grim and all-out struggle with China would have had extremely beneficial effects. Russia, in its own interest, would never take a chance of allowing so big a country as Bharat to go under the control of China. This consideration would have goaded Russia to assist Bharat, directly or indirectly, to resist China's aggression. America, too would have been forced to reconsider its policy vis-a-vis Bharat and Pakistan. For obvious reasons, it would not have risked, by itself helping Pakistan, which had gone over to China's camp completely, the possibility of China emerging supreme and unchallenged on the Asian scene. It would have probably come to the conclusion that after all, Bharat, the biggest member in the comity of democracies, could be a greater support in the long run to it than Pakistan, which is only a puffed-up military dictatorship. That would have also afforded it an opportunity to set right the wrong foreign policy it had pursued so far. The lesson of the present war that a dummy country like Pakistan, however well armed, cannot browbeat a big and virile nation as Bharat, would have acted as a major factor in reshaping its policies. The strong and freedom-loving Bharat would thus have become the meeting ground for the two nuclear giants for a joint front against China-the one common menace to entire humanity-which would have been a most desirable development in the interests of world peace.

Such a total war, unlike the present limited one, would have involved every one of our countrymen in active participation in an all-out war effort and that would have been a great chastener of

the national mind. The long spell of slavery and submissive living under the British has bred many a vice of indolence, selfishness, parochialism, etc., in us. All these vices and weaknesses would have been completely burnt in the fire of a long-drawn war and the pure gold of a united and heroic nationhood would have emerged ever more resplendent. It is therefore that a bigger and total war is welcome in spite of the temporary hardship it may entail us. In fact, we should heartily pray for such a war, though we are traditionally instinctive lovers of peace and not war-mongers; for that is the price we have to pay for peace with freedom and honour and the sooner we pay the price the better.

Meeting the Challenge

Looked at from any angle, the present situation is both a challenge and an opportunity to our people. The major challenge that we are called upon to face is in achieving self-sufficiency in all vital sectors of our national life.

Backbone of Freedom - Self-Reliance

The great fact of national life that self-reliance - swavalambana - forms the backbone of a free and prosperous nation has never been so forcefully brought home to us as at present. And the first and foremost sphere where we have to achieve self-dependence is defence. For this we must build up our own war-potential and free ourselves from dependence on foreign aid. The Government should appeal to all the industrialists, scientists and technicians and with their co-operation manufacture, at the earliest, weapons superior to those available to the enemies. The possession of atom bomb by Communist China has made it imperative for us to manufacture the same. That alone will ensure confidence in the minds of the people and the armed forces about our ability to

achieve ultimate victory. No doctrinaire or academic inhibitions should be allowed to come in the way.

Every Labourer and Scientist

Further, all of us - peasants, workers, industrialists and those in all other walks of life - have to make a determined effort to increase production of all essential commodities and free the country from the present abject dependence on other countries even for our daily bread. Every factory and field must come up with record production. We simply cannot brook scarcity or deficiency in vital goods.

And especially to the scientists war affords a great challenge. Many of the most notable inventions have been made by scientists under the serious stress and strain of war. Necessity, it is said, is the mother of invention. Radar was devised by Britain and the atom was split during the Second World War. Our scientists are no less a match in intelligence and originality to the greatest of any other country. Let them now accept the challenge of the times and bring forth such discoveries and inventions, the mere intimation of which will unnerve the enemies and which, at the same time, can be converted into instruments of national prosperity in times of peace.

Challenge of the Belly

Then there is the food sector, which calls for our paramount and urgent attention. As all know our country is faced with the growing problem of food scarcity. Agitations and demonstrations demanding adequate and prompt supply of food-grains have become almost the order of the day. Often, the agitations take a violent turn. It is true that agitation has today become the accepted mode of giving vent to people's grievances. If people sit quiet and suffer mutely, Government too sleeps and becomes

callous to the people's suffering. Sense does not dawn upon our Government in time to avert unseemly agitations. The glaring instance of Kolhapur is before us. There were food agitations in that town. Hungry mobs indulged in looting and rioting. It is said that if food-grains had reached Kolhapur a week earlier the riots would not have taken place. It was only after rioting and looting that food-grains were rushed there.

But from the point of view of finding a lasting solution, will mere agitations help? Production and distribution are the two aspects of the food problem. To some extent, the agitations may force the Government to concentrate on the second aspect, i.e., distribution. But has it made anyone sit up and think about the basic problem of production and try to find out lasting solution for that?

Break Suicidal Spell of Money

For example, we find that millions of acres of our fertile land have gone under cash-crops. Take the case of U.P. and Bihar. Substantial parts of that rich wheat and rice producing tract have now gone under sugar-cane. The result is that U.P., which used to export wheat, cannot now subsist without importing it from Punjab or somewhere else. In Maharashtra, there is a race for growing grapes, mostly for preparing wine out of it. In Andhra, a separate department for tobacco development is set up to encourage tobacco growing. Groundnut is another such cash crop. We must cry a halt to this trend and reclaim those lands for growing food-grains. If we are to import, we may as well import, for instance, sugar in place of wheat. If imports stop in the case of an emergency as the present one, at the most sugar imports may be stopped. We do not die for want of sugar, but we will certainly die for want of wheat and rice. Today, we know how our leaders are running about for import of American wheat under PL 480. They feel that without the loan-it is loan, not aid-we will not be able to survive.

Now, why do people go in for cash crops? That is because we have given undue importance to money in our day-to-day life. Money is only a medium of exchange and an instrument. Unfortunately, that instrument has been allowed to become our master. If this money-oriented outlook dominates our life, how can we ever expect the villages to produce food-grains sufficient to feed themselves and also the city-dwellers? And without food-grains how can we survive? Surely we cannot eat money and exist!

The idea that self-sufficiency in food is a 'must' for our national defence should be instilled in the minds of our farmers all over the land. They should be made to feel it a sacred call of national duty to grow food-grains sufficient to feed our population. And then only if they choose, they can grow other cash-crops. The Government and the people must devise all such measures whereby our country will become self-dependent in this foremost need.

Price of Foreign Dependence

As days go by, the urgent need for self-reliance is becoming more and more painfully clear to us. The decision of the Government to continue to release liberal supplies of canal water to Pakistan, when for want of water crops on our side are withering, and also to continue payment of crores of rupees at a time when every pie is to be conserved for our defence, is a striking instance in point. It is obvious that we have succumbed to the pressure of World Bank on whose obligation we depend for monetary aid. The saying, 'Beggars are not choosers' - and so are debtors! - has come true to a letter in our case. This is the price we are paying for not having taken care to make our economy self-reliant all these years. The habit of begging for food, for money and for everything over the last eighteen years has verily sapped our spirit of self-effort and manliness and reduced us to abject servility.

Here was the chance for our leaders to resist all outside pressures and refuse to pay a single pie or release a single drop of water to Pakistan which would only go to feed its aggressive appetite. The so-called commitment under the Canal Waters Treaty had stood automatically cancelled immediately Pakistan invaded our country. In fact, our leaders ought to have demanded full compensation from Pakistan for all our losses caused by its wanton aggression and payment of all the dues it owes us under various agreements over the last eighteen years since Partition. Though such a firm stand might have entailed immediate hardship to us, it would have steeled the nation with a new resolve to make our economy self-sustaining hereafter.

Let us realise that there are no short-cuts for preserving national freedom and honour. Every nation has to plod the hard path of self-reliance and self-sacrifice to reach that goal.

A Moral to Remember

There is a small story with a moral. A bird had built a nest in a field. When the crop was ready for harvest the landlord came there and asked his sons to send word for his relatives to come and help them in harvesting. The infants in the nest heard the landlord's instructions and were alarmed. They reported the same to their mother in the evening and urged that they leave the nest at once. But the mother bird put them at ease saying that there was no hurry. A couple of days passed but nobody turned up to harvest. The landlord again came to the fields and told his sons to send word to his servants to do the job. When the little ones reported this to the mother she again told them not to worry. Again, for the third time, the landlord came to the fields and told his sons, "Now it seems no one else is willing to help us. We shall ourselves attend to this work tomorrow." When this remark was reported to the mother bird then she said, "Well, now it is time for us to depart from here. Till today the landlord was depending

upon others to do his work and therefore there was no chance of the work being started. Now that he himself has decided to come in person the work will surely start from tomorrow."

The story has a lesson as much for nations as for individuals. And we need to remind ourselves of this at this juncture, more than at any other time.

A Shining Example

Our people need to be trained in this practical aspect of patriotism. It is not enough if we merely wish well of the country. We have to understand how best to express our aspirations of national welfare in practice and act accordingly.

There is the glowing example of England, of how they gave practical shape to their inborn spirit of patriotism when the situation demanded. When the First World War broke out, it became difficult for England to import food-stuffs from countries like Bharat. Ships carrying food-stuffs were being torpedoed by Germany. England was then faced with the challenge of the belly, which threatened to undo all their plans of war. They chalked out a master plan for bringing under plough every bit of cultivable land. They assessed the nature and quantity of crops that could be produced, and applied themselves vigorously and systematically on the food front for one year, with the result that they achieved self-sufficiency in food at least to the extent of meeting their barest needs and thus successfully met one of the major challenges of the war. England, with a low percentage of cultivable land, achieved this miracle. In contrast, how vast and fertile is our country! Our country is in fact known for its fertility of soil.
And still, we are unable to achieve self-dependence in this vital sector. To meet this challenge, it requires rousing and applying our national will in constructive channels.

Building Nation's Morale

And that brings us to the all-important question of maintaining the nation's morale at the highest pitch. For the immediate and long-range plans for achieving self-sufficiency and self-reliance in defence, in food, in industrial production, etc., entirely depend for their success on the preparedness of each one of our countrymen to offer his 'blood, sweat and tears' over a long number of years. The intense rousing of national consciousness can alone open up the perennial springs of such a spontaneous and joyful spirit of self-sacrifice among the people. Therefore it is of utmost moment that every sphere of our national endeavour exercises vigilance so as to keep up the splendid national morale in evidence today.

Every Trader

The business community has a vital role to play in this regard. During war, commodities go scarce, demands grow and there is a tendency to make bigger profits. Especially in areas directly hit by the enemy, in the face of destruction of life and property, anti-social and unscrupulous traders get a chance to hold the people to ransom. In 1962, under the shadow of Chinese aggression, when people began to flee Tejpur and cross Brahmaputura, even the riksha-pullers and the boatmen charged as much as Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 for carrying a 'single person! Similar things have happened in Jamnagar recently. Instead of rushing to the rescue of our brethren in mortal peril, to exploit their difficulty and squeeze them further is nothing short of trading in human misery, nothing short of cannibalism. Raising of prices of essential commodities is no less reprehensible.

The business community should beware of this tendency and see that such a vital sector does not become a menace to people's morale in these crucial times.

Every Village

Let every village and town maintain its all-round morale and not exhibit the slightest sign of laxity. No incident should take place anywhere that will tell upon the morale of our men on the war front. Strict watch and control over elements bent upon disturbing internal peace and order and sabotaging the war efforts should be exercised. There is no reason to allow ourselves to fall into complacent relaxation. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. All activities regarding civil defence as well as alertness and watchfulness about anti-social and anti-national elements must continue in full swing so as not to give any chance to fifth-columnists aided by infiltrators to jeopardise the country`s security from within.

The Government

In this regard, the Government has a special responsibility. Not only should they be extremely alert and determined to deal with all such subversive elements with an iron hand, but should also publicise the stern measures they have taken whenever such incidents take place.

The shooting down by Pakistan of the civilian plane carrying Sri Balawant Rai Mehta, the Chief Minster of Gujarat, and killing him is an instance in point. Grave doubts have arisen in the people`s mind whether Pakistani agents inside our borders had given the clue to the enemy in advance over the transmitter, The people also know for certain that such transmitters are working all over the country. Even to this day, the government has not allayed the anxiety of the people whether the enemy agents involved in such incidents have been caught and punished. In the absence of any authoritative information, people are bound to entertain serious doubts regarding the efficacy of our security arrangements to deal with internal enemies. That would seriously shake

people`s confidence in the Government which would be a grave tragedy in the present times. If the Government has tracked down the culprits it should inform the people so that they will feel assured of the competency of our internal security arrangements and their fervour to co-operate with the Government will be reinforced.

Not Money but Nation First

In whatever the Government does; it should unfailingly keep in mind the supreme consideration of making the people nation oriented in every one of their activities. The Governments offer of a cash award of five hundred rupees to anyone who apprehends a Pakistani paratrooper betrays a singular lack of imagination to appreciate the impulses that move in such critical times. Instead of the money-oriented appeal, they ought to have appealed to the patriotic instinct of the people and called upon them to track down the deceitful foe who was out to sabotage our nation from within. If money is the only appeal, then, Pakistans award of one thousand rupees for an ally of the saboteur may well nullify our Governments appeal and make a traitor out of him. In fact, the enemy paratroopers carried huge sums of money to purchase our people as partners in their nefarious designs. Money-oriented appeal may, by making our people conscious of money in place of nation, therefore, have quite the opposite effect to the one our Government intends.

Path of Assimilation

As the present occasion has shown, it was the intense rousing of national consciousness and prowess that has held in check, and to some extent even neutralised, the powerful Pakistani elements spread all over the land. In the past they have given the country a lot of trouble. Till now, the riots that have been breaking out now and then, the violence indulged in and even in the recent crisis,

the suspicious conduct of some of them, do make us say that they have so far refused to be assimilated in the main current of national life.

In this regard it would be useful for the Muslims here to emulate the example of their co-religionists in countries like Iran, Turkey etc. When Islam spread from Arabia to those neighbouring countries, the local people there adopted the Islamic creed but retained their culture and language and way of life. In Indonesia, a predominantly Muslim country, the children begin their learning with lessons about Rama and Sita. It is only here that the local Muslims disowned their ancestors, their languages, customs and all such elements of national heritage. And it is this oblivion of their ancestry that has led to the partition of the country.

The change is visible in them today may well be the product of the situation " in which Bharat has displayed its valour and fortitude " and proved to the world how soundly it can thrash the mischief-mongers. However, let us hope the change is due to sincere change of heart on their part and that in course of time, they will realise that they too were once Hindus, that it is their duty to be loyal to this land, to serve it honestly, to share the joys and sufferings of their compatriots and to respect the traditions of this land. On our part, we should remain vigilant and strong-willed so that all such wavering elements will find it in their own interest to merge in the mainstream of nationalism.

The Great Chastener

The supreme need of exercising alertness in keeping aglow the national consciousness and morale can best be illustrated by the problem of forging enduring national solidarity. Today, no doubt, we see our national mind cast in a splendid mood of united effort and self-sacrifice. Till yesterday selfishness, party bickering, scramble for power and internal strife were rending our national

life to shreds. The spirit of separatism was rearing its ugly head under a hundred and one pretexts. Now all that is getting consumed by the sacred flames of the sacrificial pyre of our valiant jawans. The inspiring sight of our jawans drawn from all corners of the country, right from Kerala and Madras to Punjab and Bengal, standing shoulder to shoulder on the battlefield, sharing their joys and sorrows together, fighting and dying together for the defence of our country, has projected the image of a single indivisible motherland “ the great Bharat Mata. The immortal springs of our innate national unity have now been once again opened up and the whole country with all its variety, so bewildering to those who cannot grasp our peculiar web of life, has stood united as one colossal corporate personality “ Virat Purusha.

Upsurges and Lasting Integration

But can we be sure that all this will endure and that the fissiparous tendencies and vices that were eating into the vitals of our body-politic have now become permanently a thing of the past?

Our experience after the Chinese invasion in October 1962 has lesson for us in this regard. In the wake of that aggression, our people rose as one man and displayed unparalleled unity of our purpose and action. But, after the Chinese declared unilateral cease-fire and withdrew, how long did that national spirit last! A single instance will suffice to show how short-lived it was. Recently (January 1965), a movement was launched in Madras inspired by hatred against one of our own languages, Hindi, and infatuation for a foreign tongue, English. Crores worth of national property was destroyed. A prominent leader of the English-loving section even declared that hereafter it was impossible for the people in the North and the South to live together and that vivisection of the country into North and South was the only way out. Where then had all the speeches and pledges of national

oneness administered to the people hardly a couple of years ago in the wake of Chinese invasion disappeared?

Already in the present emergency, we are hearing voices indicating a relapse into old habits. The Punjabi Suba controversy which had erupted by the ultimatum of fasting and self-immolation by Sant Fateh Singh had subsided for the time being by his withdrawing the same in the wake of Pakistani aggression. But immediately the cease-fire was announced, the old quarrel has been revived once again and Punjab, still wet with the blood of martyrs in the cause of motherland, is already plunging headlong into internecine strife.

A Sad Experience

Even our leading personalities do not seem to have learnt the lessons and imbibed the right attitudes. I have had a very sad experience in this regard, even in the present context. Soon after Pakistan launched the aggression our Prime Minister invited the leaders of various political parties and also me for consultations. In that meeting, one of the leaders was repeatedly saying, “Your army”, “Your army”. Every time he used that term I suggested to him to say “Our army”. But when he persisted I cut him short saying, “What are you speaking? Do you know what your words would imply?” this sharp reminder put him on the alert and he corrected himself thereafter. I must confess that I was taken aback at the entire tone and tenor of the participating members. There appeared to be no unifying thought or purpose except a vague idea of repelling the aggressor. They all appeared to have come there as representatives of groups and even mutually opposed camps!

In fact, this tendency to relapse into old ruts has been one of our serious undoings in past history. Our society is like Kumbhakarna, who used to wake up for a while, have a nice grub

and then doze off into deep slumber once again! Our sense of relaxation and complacency after a victory, and relapsing into old feuds and dissensions, would give the enemy the chance to strike again in a bigger way and defeat us. One of the chief causes of our defeat in the 1857 War of Independence was that the initial successes that our freedom fighters registered made them complacent. Except the few top leaders like Nana Saheb, Tatya Tope, etc., the local leaders and the rank and file of the revolution relaxed and did not press their positions of advantage to complete victory. The result was, the English got breathing time to get over the first shock of the uprising and mobilise their forces for giving a crushing blow to the freedom forces.

National consciousness and national solidarity have therefore to be rooted in something deeper and more positive than in the mere upsurge of feelings at the moment of enemy aggression. Where then shall we search for the taproots of such an enduring national solidarity and devotion?

All 'Isms' at Their Noblest!

During the present crisis, various appeals have been made by our leaders in order to invoke the spirit of sacrifice and suffering and united effort to throw out the aggressor. Appeal has been made in the name of democracy, secularism and socialism. The spirit of democracy at its best, which confers the right of freedom of speech, thought and action on the individual, is nowhere more fully recognised and practised than in the age-old Hindu tradition. If by secularism is meant that the State should not be tagged to any particular creed and that all faiths should be equally respected, then this again would be another name for Hindu tradition. In fact, Hindu tradition goes far beyond the Western concept of mere tolerance; it respects all faiths as equally sacred. If by socialism is meant removal of economic inequality, then here again it is the Hindu thought and practice that stand as the

unfailing guarantee for social and economic justice. Manu has declared that a man's right to property is limited to the amount of food he needs for the day. He who seeks to hoard more is a thief and must be punished.

All told, these various concepts can all be conveyed to our people and in a much better manner - in terms of Hindu tradition and nationalism which is already in their blood since ages. And therein lies the real source of inspiration, which can rouse all the traditional virtues of self-sacrifice and heroism in our people and make them offer gladly and spontaneously whatever is expected of them in the present national trial.

The sooner we realise this fundamental fact of national life, the better it is for us. The real and abiding source of inspiration can only be found in the spirit of unalloyed nationalism. The feeling of burning love for Bharat Mata, the great and sacred mother of us all, the intense consciousness of our being a single and indivisible brotherhood as the children of that common mother, and pride in our glorious national past, in our unique cultural heritage and aspiration to see our Bharat Mata reseated in her pristine glory and honour in the comity of nations, can alone act as a constant and powerful incentive capable of taking up in its sweep the greatest as well as the humblest of the land and bring out the best in them. That alone shall bring into full play invincible potency of our people so amply demonstrated in the present crisis and make them realise the inspiring vision of an invincible united Bharat Mata holding in one hand Kamala, the power to bless the good, and in the other the Vajra, the power to strike down evil, the embodiment of Brahma-teja and Kshatra-teja.

26. Forget Not The Lessons

The present war(War of Liberation of Bangladesh) has thrown the country into a melting-pot and cast the nation's mind in an inspiring mood of unity and patriotic fervour. It has once again proved that our nation is intrinsically one. It has also cleared, as nothing else had done so far, the many cobwebs of confusions and illusions, which had enmeshed our thinking.

After the British had left our shores, we ardently believed that our dedication to the goal of peace and goodwill to one and all in the world would naturally be reciprocated. But the repeated doses of bitter experience administered to us over the last 25 years have disillusioned us about the unscrupulous ways of the world. A fond hope, which we had cherished with great faith so far, has also been dashed to the ground in the present crisis - the hope that we have sincere friends around the world committed to the same noble ideals as ours and who would rush to our aid in times of aggression upon us.

Chastening Experience

One more experience that has shocked us is, that thought ours is a democratic country - in fact the world's largest democracy - no other democratic country has come forward to openly support us and unequivocally condemn the brutal military dictatorship of Pakistan.

Many of us were also ardently believing that America - a nation professing high human values - would always remain a sincere friend of our country which is also firmly committed to the same ideals. But its blatant support to Pakistan has rudely jolted us out of all such illusory dependence. Before the present war, our Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi had traveled round the world to seek support for our just and humanitarian cause. She returned a wiser

and chastened person and bitterly remarked that the world powers were content to express only lip sympathy for the plight, without going to its root cause of millions of refugees who have been squeezed out of East Pakistan.

‘Jis ke Lathi, Us ke Bhains’

Our faith in the capacity of UNO to deliver justice has also been found to be totally misplaced. The UNO has, by its pro-Pakistan and anti-Bharat tactics and by throwing to winds all canons of justice, truth and human values, betrayed itself as the hunting-ground for some self-seeking super-powers. Our Prime Minister has rightly declared that having once burnt our fingers in the case of Kashmir, we can no more risk a solution at the hands of UNO.

A foremost legal authority of our land, who was one of our counsels before the Kutch Tribunal, was once requested by an advocate friend to speak on International Law. The eminent jurist said that he had no time for a long speech but would give out its essence in two small sentences. He said: "The first International Law is 'Jis ki Lathi, us ki Bhains' (a not-so-graphic translation into English would be - "Might is right"); and the second, Repeat a lie hundred times and it becomes truth (notorious motto of Dr. Geobbels)."

This being the reality of the world in which we are living, we have to fashion our policies strictly in pursuance of our enlightened national self-interest and not be needlessly worried and swayed by the so-called world opinion.

So long as we fear that the world may interfere and are afraid of acting on our own, it will interfere. If we give up fear and act, then the world also will not interfere. That is the new and valuable experience we have gained this time.

Vanquish the Evil

Coming to Pakistan, its thoroughly barbaric and predatory nature is now completely exposed. Pakistan's present aggression against our country is its fourth. Hatred for our country is in its blood. It was, in fact, born in hatred and bloodshed. And it cannot exist without continuing to feed on the same. Even as it was born, it attacked us in 1947 and managed to gobble up two-fifths of Kashmir. And again in 1965, it attacked us in Kutch, occupied a part of it then invaded in Chhamb in an attempt to grab the rest of Kashmir. Later, it joined hands with China in its nefarious designs against our country.

It is not merely that Pakistan has repeatedly aggressed upon us. Right from its inception it has been indulging in inhuman atrocities and religious domination of the worst type on its hapless minority and throwing them out in millions across the borders into our country as human wrecks. Its latest action in East Bengal, the unparalleled genocide and the uprooting of ten million citizens, has condemned it in the eyes of the world as the most heinous criminal against humanity.

A Wise Warning of Ancients

Pakistan's repeated aggressions upon us and its crimes against humanity and the way we have been reacting to them till now, hold a solid lesson for us. It would be futile-nay, it would be only inviting further and bigger troubles - if we merely take up a defensive posture and somehow try to save our skin; we should, on the contrary, vanquish such an evil enemy completely; not because we harbour any territorial ambitions but to put an end, once and for all, to his capacity to indulge in his anti-human crimes or to pose a threat to our security in future. Such a total victory ought to be our aim. Our wise forbears have declared agni-shesha, roga-shesha, runa-shesha and shatru-shesha (residues

of fire, disease, debt and enemy) should not be allowed to persist. Even their smallest traces will have to be eliminated. Otherwise, the residual spark may well develop in course of time into an all-consuming fire. It is because many of our heroic commanders of freedom struggle in the past did not heed this wise warning that they had fallen a prey to wrong notions of Kshatra-dharma and let off the captured enemy kings and commanders. History tells us that these enemies recouped themselves, attacked our men once again and destroyed them.

Right Attitude Towards War

After all, Pakistan was an artificial political creation foisted upon us by foreign masters. The present disintegration of Pakistan itself is a proof of its unnatural patchwork, with no bond of mutual affinity to bind its several parts. Even in West Pakistan, deep fissures have developed which are threatening to split it further into four more states.

Such an advocacy is often dubbed as war-mongering. Advocacy of fighting against evil and for the vindication of justice and human values should not be confused as creation of war-psychosis. War psychosis had never been in our blood. Our philosophy teaches us to fight with all our strength, but at the same time eschew war-hysteria. Sri Krishna commands Arjuna to fight, but without war-fever - Yuddhyasva vigata-jwarah, and in a spirit of doing one's duty unwaveringly - swadharmamapi chaavekshya na vkkampitumarhasi.

People's Support - the Backbone

Let us now turn to the responsibilities devolving on us, the common people, in times of war. We should concentrate our thoughts and feelings on how best to mobilise and channelise all

our energies in a practical way to help our government and enthuse our jawans. As is well known, the present wars are not fought merely by the soldiers. They are total wars in which the entire people, in one way or the other, are intimately involved. Their morale, therefore, will have to be kept high. The danger of subversion by enemy agents inside our country is very real and needs to be watched and nipped in the bud. Only a vigilant public can do the job, not merely the police. Civil defence, blood donations, nursing of wounded personnel, etc., are some of the essential services to be organised forthwith.

How a Soldier is Inspired

Most important of all, the entire people should display a spirit of austerity and self-sacrificing zeal in their daily life and strictly eschew all pomp and luxury. Especially, if the youth of the county were to be chasing the fleeting fashions and pleasures of the flesh even at a critical hour like war and our people continue to indulge in petty bickerings and political rivalries, will the soldier be inspired to lay down his life for such a nation? On the other hand, should he not be assured with the conviction that his countrymen are also with him in all his trials and tribulations - and that, by chance, if he dies on the battlefield, his family will be looked after and that they will not be put to any physical hardships? Will not such a faith in the people's appreciation of his heroic role inspire him a hundredfold for display of valour and dedication on the battlefield?

Forget Not the Lessons

Finally, the lessons we have learnt during the present ordeal at a heavy price should not be allowed to be lost. Firstly, the national unity and fervour manifested now should not be allowed to be dissipated by petty political bickerings. For, it is only a nationally conscious and cohesive people who can become progressively

powerful and prosperous. Secondly, the tempo of hard work should be maintained. Production should shoot up on every field, so that our country may become self-dependent. The foremost task before us, therefore, is the moulding of such a self-sacrificing and disciplined and virile national manhood. And verily, this is the one mission to which the RSS is wholly and solely dedicated.

27. Keep The Flag Flying Aloft

The first point to be borne in mind by our brothers and sisters living abroad is to keep alive their day-to-day behaviour a spirit of intense national self-respect. And for this, a keen awareness of the glorious heritage that our forbears have left for us should ever be present in our minds.

There is even now living evidence of the glory that Bharat was in ancient times.

What the World Expects

Right from Mexico in South America to the tiny islands in the Far Eastern Pacific, our Hindu missionaries had traveled far and wide and carried with them the fragrance of our ancient wisdom. Everywhere, they made a gift of the fruits of their achievements in medicine, mathematics, science, arts and culture. But more than anything else, it was the abiding spiritual values which they preached and practised that has left the deepest impression on the human mind all over.

When Siam became independent and their parliament was to meet in the hall, they all unanimously decided to place the statue of Manu as the presiding deity. The inscription in Siamese reads: "Bhagwan Manu, the first and the greatest lawgiver of mankind." Indonesia is another country where the local Muslims are infused with the Hindu traditions. Their names, their songs, their drama, their national symbols " all carry the imprint of our epics like Ramayana.

True Ambassadors

It should be kept in mind that whenever a person goes out, he will go out as a representative of the country, the national culture and values of life “ which have given birth to him. The world assesses the values and greatness of that country and its people on the touchstone of HIS behaviour. This is all the more true in the case of a great and ancient nation such as ours. If our conduct is not in keeping with the high cultural standards and becomes but a pale reflection of those lands themselves, the image of our country too will go down in their eyes. The respect and esteem that our country suffers will do incalculable harm both to our countrymen residing there and also to our country. It is only when their conduct is imbued with the right spirit of our dharma and samskriti that they can stand up as ideal Hindus and would be able to present an inspiring image of our nation and also receive a similar response from those people.

But Alas!

However, the reports that we receive in this respect are often very distressing. Those who go over there seem to lose their identity altogether. Their habits of food, daily customs and traditions all get changed. Their ignorance about our dharma, our cultural heritage and our history seem to be colossal. As a result, they are carried away by the so-called scholars of those lands who have willfully spread deceptive theories and interpretations about our life. And they develop a sort of contempt for all that is ours and begin to look upon the foreigners ways as something great and worthy of emulation. Often, they succumb to the vulgar temptations of the materialistic affluence and permissive society there, and forget all about our county and culture. Quite a few of them even decide to settle there permanently.

To Impart Samskars

It is necessary, therefore, that our Hindu brethren there, who have imbibed the right samskars here, should meet regularly with a view to rekindling among all our people there the spirit of national pride, the awareness of our all-round achievements in the past and our mission while abroad. It will not be enough if we congregate on certain occasions and for some special programmes only. Even in our shastras, nritya (dance), geeta (music), and vadya (instruments) are mentioned, but these were useful only if used with the definite purpose of imparting samskars. Mere music and dance by themselves do not constitute culture. If the entertainment aspect alone is taken up and the cultural value ignored, it would surely lead to social degeneration. If the awareness of reviving the Hindu values in our daily chores is to be made intensely and continuously alive, regular assemblage with suitable samskar“imparting programmes is a “must”.

Apart from their regular assemblage, there should be daily singing of bhajans and shlokas at home. Especially the children should be taught to recite the same with due devotion and earnestness. And wherever there are our temples the Hindus should cultivate the habit of congregating on certain holy occasions and conduct programmes like satsangs and havans.

Keeping close contact with the learned men and spiritual teachers who visit those countries from time to time and arranging suitable programmes would be of great help in furthering the above-mentioned objective.

Assimilate the Good

It is said that our people who go abroad are carried away by the superficial attractions there and do not try to go deeper to find out the really good points in the life of those people. No people on the face of this earth are entirely without some abiding virtues, nor will they be endowed with all the necessary noble qualities. We

should be able to discriminate and make a dispassionate assessment of their virtues and vices, and so also, of our own strong points and weak points. We shall then be able to achieve a harmonious blend of the elements of excellence in both the systems. Our intelligent young men who are staying abroad should take up such a comparative study and enlighten our other brethren there with the results of their findings.

There are indeed very pious people worthy of emulation in all countries. We should do well to emulate their examples. There is the recent example of a great and saintly American, who was so full of piety and love for all living creatures that when he would sit with his hands immersed in a tank, fish would swarm and play around without the least fear or hesitation. Such was his spirit of identity with the entire living creation.

Pick Up Such Gems

There are so many inspiring items of their literature which we could pick and make them our own. Many of our sublime thoughts are echoed in their poetry and philosophical works. I remember a most touching poem "Abou Ben Adhem" by Leigh Hunt.

ABOU BEN ADHEM (may his tribe increase!)

Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw, within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold.
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
"What writest thou?" The vision raised its head,
And with a look made of all sweet accord,

Answerd , "the names of those who love the lord."
"And is mine one?" said Abou." Nay, not so",
Replied the Angel. Abou spoke more " low,
But cheerly still, and said, "I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellowmen".
The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night,
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blest,
And lo! Ben Abhems name led all the rest.

Respond to Local Aspirations

Then there is the important aspect of cultivating the right attitude and pattern of behaviour towards the local population.

The first thing that our brothers abroad have to bear in mind is, that while carrying on a profession or an employment there, earning and amassing money should bot be sole aim. They should understand and appreciate the problems of the local people and sympathise with their aspirations. Some portion of their earnings should be kept apart for promoting their welfare and enlightening them on the great principles and values of Hinduism. At the same time, they should, by their personal example and living, demonstrate that they are coming from the land of a great and hoary culture and thus set a personal example to others.

An Eye-opener

If these essential points of conduct are ignored it might very well cause disrepute and often misery and hardship to themselves. Probably, this is one of the main reasons why our Hindus in East African countries are put to a lot of trouble these days. In the past our people there, for the most part, did not actively sympathise with the aspirations of the native African people while they were

struggling against the White colonialists. They also did not spend out of their earnings for promoting the welfare of the local population, for their education or for enlightening them in the tenets of Hinduism. The religious vacuum prevalent there was filled in by the Christian and Islamic missionaries. The upshot of all these lapses on our part was that when the Africans became free, they were dominated by Christian and Islamic propaganda which soon made them lose sympathy for Hinduism or for Hindus in general. They therefore set about to displace the Hindus form their positions of strength and resources. The Hindus have had to leave those countries in large numbers and suffer the loss of their properties and lifelong earnings. This experience should therefore serve as an eye-opener to all Hindus living abroad.

Be world Missionaries

In a nutshell, our brethren abroad will have to bring about a total transformation in their thoughts and life-styles if they have to lead a happier, richer and more honoured life abroad and also make the image of Bharat shine brighter in those countries. And in order to do this the one supreme conviction that we are a great people charged with a World Mission, should ever be vibrant in our breasts; that a sacred duty and trust is cast upon us of bringing home to the entire humanity the sublime truths embedded in our Dharma and that the various ills and challenges being faced by it could be met successfully on the basis of the all-comprehensive, scientific yet spiritual outlook of Hinduism. If this ultimate vision is kept constantly is view then everything else will become clear as crystal.

With Friends From Abroad

Q: Some of our friends feel that it is burdensome to stick on to our mother tongues while in foreign lands. They also think

that it is of little utility in their day-to-day life there. What should be our attitude in this regard?

A: It is very necessary that we use our own languages in our homes even abroad. Usually it so happens that when those who reside overseas for a long time come to Bharat they cannot speak fluently in their mother tongue at all. They take to English even with their relatives and friends. This should not be. There is the instance of Shri Ramlal, a revolutionary hero, who was exiled for many years in America. Once when he had visited Bharat incognito, we requested him to speak to our swayamsevaks. To our surprise he spoke in chaste Marathi even though his mother tongue was Hindi. That was possible for him because of his true patriotic and revolutionary fervour. If we cherish the same patriotic fervour we could easily preserve our languages even in foreign lands. And that is very necessary to keep alive our traditional Hindu way of life.

Q: Our children lose touch with our languages very quickly. Correct pronunciation is lost. What is way out?

A: They should be regularly taught lessons, shlokhas and stotras.

Q: What about their moral instruction?

A: Prepare good story books with Hindu names and characters conveying the great tenets and virtues of our Hindu culture. Ramayana and Mahabharata offer a rich store for such stories.
Q: We intend building a temple.

A: That is very good. It is better if it is dedicated to Pranava or Omkar which is accepted by all sects of Hinduism, instead of to any one particular god or goddess.

Q: One of the problems of those living abroad is that many of them are unmarried and single. The foreign society would not readily admit them to their fold, and the usual entertainments like television and cinema bore them. They feel lonely.

A: One way out would be to open good libraries containing books in our languages on our culture, history, literature and philosophy. Our people could borrow books and usefully spend their time.

Q: Some feel that insistence on the word Hindu may spoil our image when our sanyasins go to foreign lands to preach.

A: It is only defeatism or inferiority complex that makes one think so. Swami Vivekananda and Swami Abhedananda both worked in foreign lands. They never fought shy of proclaiming themselves as the champions of Hinduism. They spoke the truth frankly and fearlessly. They even criticised what was being practised there under the name of Christ though they deeply respected him.

The West admired and even respected them on that account. But now, that is not the case. Many of our sanyasins go all out to please them and in the process dilute their own thoughts and convictions. That has only made them lose respect in the foreigners eyes.

Q: Some Muslims in U.K. would like to join with us in this effort. Should we encourage them to do so?

A: Provided they are prepared to own the Hindu culture as their own. They could have their own way of upasana but should consider the Hindu heritage and history as their own.

PART THREE

THE PATH TO GLORY

For Social Uplift

28. Untouchability - The Curse And The Cure

At the root of the malady of “untouchability” lies the belief among the common mass of people that it is part of dharma, and transgressing it would be a grave sin. This religious perversion is the chief reason why this pernicious practice has continued to stick to the popular mind till now in spite of dedicated efforts put in by a host of religious stalwarts and social reformers over centuries. Guru Nanak, Acharya Ramanuja, Basaveshwara, Shankar Dev, Swami Dayananda, Narayana Guru, Gandhiji and Veer Savarkar, to name only a few, have striven their utmost to eradicate this standing blot on Hindu society.

But the blot remained. Even now the so-called higher castes refuse to treat the so-called untouchables as their equals. Papers have reported that in a village in Rajasthan a Harijan youth was beaten to death because he grew moustaches, which was supposed to be the prerogative of only the Kshatriya! Not did our dharmagurus condemn such practices because even they mistook the custom for Dharma.

A Momentous Session

That this social evil draws its sustenance from a religious misconception suggests that the traditional mathadhipatis, who are looked upon by the people at large as the authentic spokesmen of Dharma, should come forward to set right this anti-religious practice. A right beginning was made, in this direction, at the Vishwa Hindu Sammelan at Udupi in 1969.

All the various sampradayas in the Hindu fold “ the Shaiva, Veerashaiva, Madhwa, Vaishnava, Jaina, Buddha, Sikh “ were represented in the conference. A resolution calling upon the

Hindu world to banish "untouchability" in all their religious and social affairs in accordance with the directive of the revered dharmagurus and acharyas, was passed unanimously.

The Command of Jagadgurus

The historic directive reads as follows:

In pursuance of the objective that the entire Hindu society should be consolidated with the spirit of indivisible oneness and that there should be no disintegration in it because of tendencies and sentiments like touchability and untouchability. The Hindus all over the world should maintain the spirit of unity and equality in their mutual intercourse.

The passing of the resolution can indeed be called a step of revolutionary significance in the history of Hindu society. It was a moment of victory of the true spirit of Dharma over a garbled custom.

However, a violent approach to enforce this type of resolution would be entirely counter-productive. Only positive and persuasive methods would yield results.

Some years ago news had appeared in papers that a prominent social leader along with a group of untouchables and non-Hindus wanted to make forcible entry into the temple of Vishwanath at Kashi. The papers had also reported that the priests of the temple had resisted and foiled the attempt. Some days after the incident, I happened to visit Kashi. I met the priests and asked them why they had resisted. They replied, "Well, thousands of devotees daily throng to worship the Lord. All of them enter the sanctum sanctorum, touch the sacred Linga and offer their worship. Nobody has ever enquired to what caste or sect they belonged. However, when that leader came with all the fanfare of

propaganda and showing off to the whole world that he is a messiah with an universal outlook born to uplift the downtrodden and that we are the culprits, we naturally felt insulted. And we felt like paying him in his own coin.

This is exactly where many of our overzealous reformers have erred. Force, vilification of one section of the people, publicity and propaganda and all such methods are bound to recoil and prove to be cures worse than the disease.

Apprehension Comes True

In fact, emphasising and harping on the word Harijan itself is not conducive to the eradication of the sense of segregation that those sections of our people have been suffering. Once, when I had an occasion to meet Gandhiji, I had expressed my apprehension that the coining of the new name Harijan " however holy its literal meaning " may lend itself to separatist consciousness resulting in the formation of a group with vested political interest and endangering social unity. However, Gandhiji felt that it would not happen. Unfortunately, since then, the gulf has not diminished but is increasing year after year. And the dissension is now taken to the political forum as well.

False and Motivated

It appears that one more sinister dimension is being given to the problem. There has been a spurt, all of a sudden, during the last few years, of reports of attacks on Harijans by caste Hindus appearing in newspapers. I strongly suspect that this type of reporting is all inspired. Many a time, the news itself is not correct.

There was a case of sacrifice of a Harijan youth in one of the villages in Maharashtra. Enquiries have shown that the

superstitious villagers thought that the particular young man was practising sorcery, and that it had resulted in many epidemics taking the toll of many children. It is also reported that the young man accepted the charge of sorcery as true. Amongst those who arranged his sacrifice, one of the leading persons was his own uncle. So the question of Harijan-non-Harijan confrontation does not arise at all. But the papers painted the incident in lurid colors as a case of inhuman treatment of Harijans by the Caste Hindus.

There is anther instance of Uttar Pradesh, which is more revealing. The papers had flashed that the Harijan community had been attacked, and their houses brunt, by the Caste Hindus of the village. But on enquiry it was found that the village was inhabited only by Hrijans and Muslims. Not a single family of Caste Hindus was residing there. Obviously, the attack of Muslims on the Hrijans was given the perverted color of atrocity on Hrijans by Caste Hindus.

Why this Discrimination?

I have a suspicion that some foreign hand is behind this systematic and subtle propaganda. Otherwise there is no reason why such news items should be played up so prominently. In the case of riots by Muslims which go on all over the country, utmost care and restraint is exercised not to disclose the names of communities involved. The ostensible reason given out is that the naming of the rioting communities would further embitter their mutual relations and the riots might spread to other parts. One fails to understand why the same reasoning is not being applied in the case of Harijans and Caste Hindus also. It only lends weight to the suspicion that forces outside and inside our country which are bent upon dividing and weakening the Hindu people, are manoeuvring the news services, and unfortunately our press too seems to have fallen a prey.

Playing the Old Game

To our bitter experience, we know how the British used to set up one caste or sect against the other, as for example the non-Brahmin against the Brahmin, and play the game of divide and rule, and how our own people " even the so-called leaders " fell a willing prey to it. We should take a lesson from that, and beware of similar designs even now of foreign powers and their agents inside our borders. Be it remembered, there are quite a few inside our country who are only too willing to play the game with an eye on the block votes of separatist groups. We are already a broken people shattered into so many pieces and we should not in any way help the forces of disintegration.

Set New Criteria

It goes without saying that if any one is suffering from any disability, social or political, on account of what is called caste, that must be removed completely. Dr. Ambedkar had envisaged the special privileges for "Scheduled Castes" for only 10 years from the day we became a Republic in 1950. But it is going on, being extended. Continued special privileges on the basis of caste only, is bound to create vested interests in them in remaining as a separate entity. That would harm their integration with the rest of the society.

There are persons who are in real bad circumstances in all sections of society. There is no caste, which is without its own poor, the needy and the destitute. It would, therefore be proper that privileges should be based on the economic conditions of the people. That will ease out matters and the heart-burning among others that the so-called Harijans alone are enjoying privileges will also be removed.

Excelling on Many Fronts

To say that these so-called untouchable castes are inherently wanting in qualities of head and heart and that they would not be able to come up to level of the rest of society for a long time to come is not only an insult to them but a travesty of facts.

History records that the so-called untouchables have been in the forefront of the war of national liberation all these one thousand years. They have been among the staunchest and bravest fighters in the armies of Rana Pratap, Guru Govind Singh and Shivaji. Some of the crucial battles which, Shivaji fought with the hostile forces of Delhi and Bijapur were led and manned by these same valorous brethren of ours.

Not only the battlefield but in the field of spirituality as will, these brethren of ours have excelled. Countless have been the sadhus and sanyasins born in these castes, who have commanded the unreserved reverence of all sections of society.

The unflinching faith of these brethren in our dharma is indeed inspiring. In spite of the insults and humiliations they have been suffering at the hands of the rest of society in the name of dharma for so long, they have stubbornly resisted the temptation to renounce their mother faith and opt for an alien one. In the wake of Partition, millions of Namashudras " the untouchables of Bengal " preferred to bear untold hardships and migrated to our borders to remain in the Hindu fold here rather than save skin by getting converted to Islam.

Work - Springing from the Heart

Now how shall we set about to meet the challenge? Resolutions and Directives such as the one issued at the Udupi conference cannot be translated into actual life by mere pious expressions. Centuries-old prejudices do not disappear by words or wishful

thinking. Hard work, right propaganda has to be undertaken from town to town, village to village, house to house, and people have to be educated to accept and practise what has been resolved, not merely as a concession to the pressure of modern times, but as an abiding principle and way of life, in an humble spirit of atonement for past mistakes. A change of heart, a moral and emotional change in attitudes and behaviour, has to he brought about.

Working for the economic and political betterment of those who had been relegated to the background and bringing them up to stand shoulder to shoulder with all the rest of our people is a Herculean task. But this in itself is not enough; for, such equality may be brought about without shedding the feelings of separateness. What we should desire and strive for, is not merely economic and political equality “ we want a real change, a complete integration. This change is beyond the power of politics, of governmental plans. It is impossible to achieve it by the clever manipulations of political parties dealing in patch-work in the name of integration.

Strenuous work springing from the heart and manifesting itself in day-to-day behaviour, work on a spiritual, moral and social plane, is called for.

Emphasize Unity, Ignore Differences

Towards this end, programmes like bhajans, keertans, festivals, recital of stories from Ramayana and Mahabharata could be arranged, where all Hindus would assemble in a spirit of common brotherhood submerging all such differences as touchable and untouchable in a current of pure dharmic devotion. Service projects to promote literacy, health, sports, etc., should also be undertaken. Modern techniques like the audio-visual appliances may also be usefully adopted. However, the central point of all

these activities should be the appeal to the heart, the emphasis on the unifying and ennobling factors, and ignoring of differences.

Secret of Success

It is because this golden rule has been scrupulously paractised that in Sangh there is no trace of any dissension on account of caste or sect or language or on any other score. Hundreds and thousands of Swayamsevaks drawn from all strata of society sit and eat together, play and sing together without so much as caring to know to what castes or sects the others belong.

Gandhiji himself was pleasantly surprised to witness this rare phenomenon at a Sangh camp in Wardha in 1934. The camp was attended by over, 1,500 Swayamsevaks, all put up in barracks and tents. Just nearby was Gandhijis ashram. Seeing the camp humming with the activities of several hundreds of young men, he desired to visit it. Accordingly, our Wardha District Sanghchalak, who was formerly Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee, welcomed Gandhiji to the camp. Gandhiji came and saw all the arrangements for residence, mess, etc., in the camp. Then he enquired, “How many Harijans are here?” Our Sanghchalak replied, “I do not know, for I have never enquired.” “You can enquire at least now and tell me.” “That I cannot do. As far as we are concerned they are all Hindus and that is sufficient for us.” “Then shall I ask?” “That is left to you”, replied our Sanghachalak. After making persistent enquiries directly with the Swayamsevaks Gandhiji came to know that there were persons from all castes, including Harijans, carrying on all the camp programmes together, right from eating to playing, in a spirit of joy and harmony, without even being conscious of their castes. He was simply amazed. After that Doctorji met Mahatmaji and explained to him how the Sangh was meeting with success in achieving unity by its technique of stressing the inherent oneness and ignoring superficial differences. This experience had left such

a deep impression on Gandhijis mind that he recounted it years later in his address to the Swayamsevaks at Bhangi colony, Delhi, in September 1947. He had then said that he was “very much impressed with the discipline, the complete absence of untouchability and the rigorous simplicity among the Swayamsevaks.

This singular achievements of Sangh has been made possible because of the attitude ingrained in its workers, who declare: “If you are a Hindu, it is sufficient for us. We dont care for anything else. Hindu is the only consideration that counts for us; no caste, no sect, nothing counts for us.”

29. Serving The Neglected Brethren

We find a strange phenomenon in the Eastern regions of our country. Our Government regognises the existence of the "Christians" but not of the "Hindus". The Government has classified all the "non-Christians" as "tribals" as distinct from Hindus (started in 1881 Census, continued by our Government).

What the Politician Says

These protagonists of separatism argue that these "tribals"worship things like trees, stones and serpents. Therefore they are "animists", and cannot be called as Hindus. Now this is something which, only an ignoramus who does not know the a, b, c, of Hinduism will say. The word "animus" means the principle of life, which is immanent in all creation. Whatever be its form of expression, it is that Inherent Spirit that is worshipped. Do not the Hindus all over the country worship the tree? Tulasi, Bilva, Ashwattha are all sacred to the Hindu.

What Sri Krishna Says

In the Bhgavad-Gita Sri Krishna, while denoting the forms in which the Spirit is more manifest than in others, has pointed to Ashwattha among the trees. He has also spoken of the serpent and various kinds of animals and birds. And so also of mountains and rivers. Sri Krishna closes the series of such manifestations with the declaration:

"Yadyadvibhootimatsatvam Shreemadoorjitameva vaa
Tattadevaavagachha tvam

Mama tejomshasambhavam"

(*Every such element as is endowed with glory, brilliance or power, know that to be a manifestation of a Spark of My Divine Effulgence.*)

Divine Hand Continues

The worship of Nag, the cobra, is prevalent throughout our country. In the far South there are huge temples of Subrahmanya Swamy, the name given to Nag there. Then, should we term all these devotees and worshippers as "animals" and declare them as non-Hindus?

It was the Englishman who had planted such pernicious theories with a view to dividing and breaking up the Hindu society into as many small factions as possible. But our misfortunate today is that even after the foreigner has left, our own people born and brought up in our society are continuing the same divisive policies.

Work From Heart

It is now up to us to go to these neglected brethren of our society and strive our utmost to better their living conditions. We will have to work out plans by which their primary physical needs and comforts could be satisfied. We will have to open schools, hostels and training courses to equip them to benefit from these schemes. Alongside this physical amelioration love and pride in Hindu Dharma and the spirit of identity with the rest of Hindus have to be rekindled in their minds through the channel of devotion to God. For that, we have to give up false notions of high and low and mingle with those brethren in spirit of equality. We should freely mix with them, eat with them, and sing and chant with them the holy songs of devotion.

Then there is the problem of the wandering habits of the tribals. How can they be given any training or samskars when they do not stay at one place at all for any length of time? No doubt the Government is trying to do something for them. But the Government is after all a machinery. And a machinery cannot change the behavior patterns of people. It is the human touch that can make our tribal brethren take to a settled life. It we could domesticate even the wild animals roaming in the jungles, can we not persuade our own people to take to better and more refined ways of life?

See how the foreign missionaries are working in these areas. What a tremendous amount of effort and perseverance they display! What an amount of trouble they cheerfully undergo! They come from far-off lands and go and settle in the deep jungles. They live there in small houses just like the local people. They mix with them, learn their languages and become one with the local habits and customs. They behave with sweetness and sympathy. Can we not take a leaf out of their experience and do something?

Lessons of the Past

There is one point on which we have to be specially forewarned. And that is the census. Our pervious experience shows that the followers of Islam inflate their numbers and this has had tragic repercussions on our countrys affairs. The Hindus should not remain ignorant of the potency of numbers. They should all, without fail, register themselves with the census. Further all Hindus, to whatever sect, caste, clan, or tribe they may belong, must put down their community as “Hindu” only. Our brethren in the far Eastern region “ they may be Naga, Khasi, Jayantia, Mikir, Mizo, etc. “ all should designate their community as Hindu only, whatever the differences in their ways of dress, languages, food

and local customs. The basic truth about our single social entity should always be borne in mind.

Without such basic unity, our brothers in those regions would also find it difficult to ward off the evil designs of the foreign Christian missions. They should realise that it is due to the their present mutually exclusive divisions into so many “tribes” that they have been reduced into a second class position. The Christians, though in a minority, have been able to assert their influence and establish their hegemony in certain parts of that region.

Rich with Qualities

When we go and mix with those forest-dwelling brothers we shall find that they are a people rich with qualities such as courage, intelligence, industry, honesty, warmth of heart, culture and spiritual refinement. They form some of the finest men of our armed forces. Probably it was only Maharana Pratap who had established close links with them and made them equal partners with the society. The forest-dwellers in those regions, the Bhills, stood shoulder to shoulder with Rajputs generation after generation in the heroic defence of Swadesh and Swadharma.

Let us Make Amends

Nowadays, when some of our people go to them it is only with a view to exploit them. There are some who condemn them as beef eaters and, for that reason, refuse to mingle with them or consider them as Hindus. But have we ever cared to sympathetically understand their conditions? First of all, has any one gone to them and taught them devotion to cow? That they should look upon cow as their mother? No! Then the fault is not with them, but with us. Secondly, they have no sufficient foodstuffs to feed themselves with. As a result, out of sheer necessity, they have

taken to beef eating. It is not out of flair or fashion. Here too, the lapse is ours. It is up to us, the rest of the Hindus, to make amends by going to them, educating them, and elevating their living conditions and also their cultural standards.

It is wrong to say that our social system was at the root of their neglecting. In olden times when the Panchayat system was the basic unit of society, these forest-dwellers had an honored place in it. We find it mentioned in the description of the political system even as early as during the reign of Sri Rama.

Spirit of Karmayogin

The absence of contact and affinity with these brothers and sisters for the last several centuries has been the chief cause for their present neglected and backward conditions. They have been deprived of the education, which the others in society have availed themselves of. And in the absence of suitable technical and other training they have remained behind in their capacity to produce and prosper.

And we have to carry this education to the remotest corners of our country, to those for whom dharma has been reduced to a mere bundle of crude superstitious rites, to those who never had the opportunity to learn and live dharma “ in far-off villages, in the hills and in the dense forests. We must expect hardships, troubles and tribulations in this work and often we may feel that it has been a thankless task. But, without expecting immediate results or miracles to happen, we must face the hard facts and with infinite patience plod on to success in the true spirit of a Karmayogin.

Serve All

Many workers appear to take a delight in blaming others for all ills. Some may put the blame on the political perversities, others

on the aggressive activities of the Christians or Muslims and such other faiths. Let our workers keep their minds free from such tendencies and work for our people and our Dharma in the right spirit, lend a helping hand to all our brethren who need help and strive to relieve distress wherever we see it. In this service no distinction should be made between man and man. We have to serve all, be he a Christian or a Muslim or a human being of any other persuasion; for, calamities, distress and misfortunes make no such distinction but afflict all alike. And in serving to relieve the sufferings of man let it not be in a spirit of condescension or mere compassion but as devoted worship of the Lord abiding in the heart of all beings, in the true spirit of our dharma of surrendering our all in the humble service of Him who is Father, Mother, Brother, Friend and Everything to us all.

And may our actions succeed in bringing out the Glory and Effulgence of our Sanatana-Eternal¬-Dharma.

Questions & Answers

Q: How should we bring home our cultural ideas to the Girijans and such others?
A: Only from an equal plane can this be done, and not from a high pedestal. First of all, they should be made to feel that they are our equals and brothers. Let them feel our genuine love and affection. Then only will they respond to our call and be receptive.

In fact, in the past, there were arrangements for maintaining cultural contact with them. The Goswamis of that province were people specially meant to mix with the tribals and educate and raise their cultural standards. In Assam these people belong to the panth of Acharya Shankara Deva, a disciple of Chaitanya. Once I met a few of them. They said, “How can we mix with such an uncultured lot?” However, after some discussion with them, they

agreed to sit together with these people and have meals. The tribal leaders came and they could never imagine that such a thing could happen. Still they were grouping themselves at a distance. I told them that we were all brothers and made two tribal leaders sit by my either side for meals. They were simply dumbfounded. The trouble is, we keep aloof from them and complain that they are so bad and all that.

Of late they never like to contact the Government officials. Do you know why? There is a certain group of Nagas who tie their hair as knot in the forehead like a projecting horn. They consider it as beautiful, it gives a certain respectability and so on. An officer, who was appointed to look after these people, came to Assam. The tribal leaders came to meet him. But he was least imaginative. He caught hold of one of the their leaders, caught his knot of hair, shook him and said, “Cut it off. You must be a modern man.” The Naga leaders were taken aback. Why could he not deal with them with some common sense and imagination? Why not respect their sentiments? They never afterwards liked to associate with Government officials.

(*With President of Wadaar, a backward community, organisation, Bombay.*)

Q: The educational standards are very low in our community. The matriculates are employed as either clerks or as watchman in offices and factories. The more educated get some higher jobs. But their earnings will be much less than those who earn by physical labor. We are appealing to the Government to lower the educational qualifications required for government employment with respect to our community.

A: Education is, no doubt, essential. But if by physical labor, earnings is more, then even the matriculates should take to such work. Education and physical labor should not come in conflict

with each other. It is only when these two are combined that prosperity ensues.

It is also not desirable to demand lowering of educational qualifications for employment. On the contrary, such sections of our people as are educationally backward should take the initiative to raise their standards. If the minimum marks required is 35% this year, you should demand that it be raised to 40% after a couple of years. It is through such self-efforts that a backward section can raise itself up. Otherwise, the children in such sections will never be able to cherish higher ambitions in life. They will for ever be deprived of high positions which require greater intelligence and capacity. And people with low intelligence will also bring down the level in whatever sphere they work. The life of so many, including his own, will then be in jeopardy. The same rule applies to doctors, engineers and technicians. In the present scientific and technological age, especially, it is essential that we increase our efficiency and capacity. Hence, it is necessary to see that our children imbibe the right ambitions and increase their capacities and educational standards. I urge that you should insist on this aspect.

The Questioner*:* I must confess that this is altogether a new viewpoint. So far, no one put forward this aspect before us. I feel it is the only right attitude.

Q: Some in our society feel that they are discriminated against in religious and social affairs by being denied yajnopavita, gotra, etc. what do you suggest as the way out?

A: They can be given yajnopavita and gotra. If they do not know the gotra they can be given the gotra of the priest. That was being done in olden days and is sanctioned by the Shastras. In the Shastras, it is also said that all those who do not come under any gotra belong to Kashyapa gotra, because all are supposed to have

been born from Kashyapa. They should be given equal rights and footings in the matter of religious rites, in temple worship, in the study of Vedas, and in general, in all our social and religious affairs. This is the only right solution for all the problems of casteism found nowadays in our Hindu society. This I have submitted to all the Shankaracharyas, as also other Acharyas I have met.

30. Human Touch, the Great Solvent

We are assembled here to think out what solid contribution we can make towards the cause of resuscitation of our Dharma and our society, which is, I am sure, dearest and nearest to the hearts of us all. I shall give the example of the tea planters in Assam to make a few points clear.

The Contrast

There are some plantations owned by the English. How does the English planter behave with his workers? He goes to their houses, pats their children and personally looks to their medical needs. He builds up a human relationship with the entire family of the workman. He does not stop at that. He builds a chapel or a church in his estate. He and his managerial staff and their families go there every Sunday morning without fail. They also encourage the workmen to attend the Church prayers. They offer some extra benefits to those who attend. They engage a priest to give weekly sermons to the church-goers. By such inducements and persuasion they have succeeded to a large extent in converting their workers to Christianity.

By contrast, there are also our own countrymen, Hindus, owning tea plantations, whose relations with their workers are anything but cordial. They only try to squeeze out as much work from them as possible. The workers resent and revolt and demand more wages and better amenities. The tension is increasing day by day. The tension is not limited merely to the economic aspect. There is absolutely no social intercourse between the two. The owners display no human touch at all in their dealings with their workers. They hardly visit the workers abodes, much less share their joys and sorrows.

Take a Lesson from Them

How tragic that foreigners can have such humane relationship with the native people, although for sinister purposes, but our own men should be high-browed and high-handed towards our own people! It is high time that our countrymen such as planters and industrialists who employ a large number of workers recognise the signs of the times and become aware of their responsibilities towards their workers “ their own kith and kin in society. Their human touch will go a long way in wiping the tears of sorrow and suffering arising out of both economic and social debilities, which are weighing heavily upon the workers. Also they should build a temple in each estate or labour colony and arrange for weekly bhajan and worship, religious discourses and Harikathas.

Trust the Inherent Goodness

Some owners argue that if they show human consideration, the workers become unruly and take undue advantage of it. I do not think that normally it is so. If the workers feel that you are sincere, and not merely exhibitive, in your humane intentions and actions, then they are bound to respond in course of time. I can never conceive that our people are so devoid of inherent goodness as not to respond to noble and humane virtues. Even our day-to-day experience belies that argument. Once, when I was in Banaras University, our household servant was arrested at his native place for possessing some valuable article. The police let him off upon my assurance that the article was given by me and that the servant had been honest throughout. The servant thereafter gave up whatever dishonesty he had previously and served us with exemplary honesty and gratitude.

Often the question is asked, “How are we to face the Communists? Once the workers are indoctrinated by the Communist thought, they will view all our actions, good-

intentioned though they may be, with suspicion. Even to this I say, the Communists can get a foothold only where there is no human touch. There is no ism which can outbeat the appeal of the human heart. After all the workers are human beings first and then, if at all, Communists.

How Heartless We are!

It is in this, the factor of human touch, that we are falling short. This shortcoming is to be found not merely in plantations or factories; it is in villages, it is in the cities, it is in the everyday life of our entire people. For instance, there are persons in affluence who engage maidservants for their household menial work. Often the maid-servant comes with her child to the masters house, leaves her child in a corner and engages herself in the household work. It is also quite a common sight that the small babes left uncared for cry and cry themselves hoarse. But is it also not commonly observed that the mistress of the house turns a deaf ear to the weeping child? Nor does she ask the maid-servant to take a few minutes off the work and first soothe the crying babe.

In every province of our country there are vast areas where our people are ill fed, ill clothed, illiterate and devoid of any opportunities to cultivate religious devotion. And all this is exploited by the Communists and Christian missionaries. Even in the advanced parts we find that the Christian missionaries have spread into deep interiors.

An Example to Emulate

It they, the foreign Christian missionaries, having come from far-off lands and working with ulterior motives could do it, we with positive love for our people and our dharma certainly do it better. There is the small experiment of Idinthakarai, a village in Tamil Nadu. Some 500 years ago the entire village had been converted

to Christianity by fraud. But recently the entire village population decided to return to their ancestral Hindu fold. One of our Swamijis went there and carried out the coming-back ceremony. But those people had plenty of problems. Firstly, the problem of unemployment was there. They are all poor fishermen. During the rainy season they cannot go out to the seas. They have no work and so nothing to eat. The Mangalore Ganesh Beedi proprietors came forward and started a small centre, which could give work to ladies and boys and make them earn a living. Then some other generous friends came forward to give them fibres for nets. Some of our Swamijis promised donations for a temple. People from surrounding villages often visit those people and they feel comforted they have been received with warmth. And this example of Idinthakarai has generated a similar healthy trend in other surrounding villages too. That is the magic of the human touch.

For a Big Heart.

Such ventures could be undertaken in all provinces. And for all such projects vast resources are doubtless needed. It is up to those who are by the Grace of God in affluent circumstances, to come forward and support them with the necessary material resources.

Proper upkeep of temples should also be the special responsibility of such people. Local bodies should be established to look after the arrangements for daily worship, for its cleanliness and sanctity. An overall trust can be formed later on to control and guide the affairs of the temples in the spirit for which the temples are built. The present state of neglect and dilapidation of many of our temples is a sad reflection on our callousness towards our gods and goddesses. Look at the Muslims. They see to it that even a pile of bricks in the name of some peer in some out-of-the-way

roadside is properly whitewashed twice a year and a green flag kept fluttering over it.

And for all this, it is the devotion, the heart, that is all-important. If the heart is large, funds and every other kind of resource will flow automatically. And it is intense love for our society and the yearning to see our Hindu society rise once again in full prosperity and glory, that will make the heart generous and devoted.

31. Call To Motherhood

Our mothers have a special responsibility of rearing up the budding generations of our society. Now, what does "rearing up" really imply? Is feeding and clothing the children and sending them to schools, the only thing to be done? On the contrary, the essential aspect is to inculcate in them the right type of samskars such as devotion to duty, spirit of personal endeavour, love of the motherland and readiness for service to society. Our mothers have to attend to this aspect of character formation as their first duty. And for this purpose, they have to be mindful of the many little things, which go to fashion the young minds.

Morning Imprints

When I remember my childhood days I am enveloped in very tender and sweet memories. When I used to be woken up in the mornings, I used to listen to the sweet melody of some stotras and chantings of gods names being sung by my mother even as she was engaged in her morning chores. What deep and holy imprints those melodies must have left on my young mind, coming as they did in those calm and serene mornings! Just contrast this with the so-called modern homes. The mothers neither wake up their children in the early mornings nor do they sing divine chantings. Not unoften, the children start their day listening to some obscene cinema songs and humming those tunes. I know of an instance where a young mother, not an uneducated girl, was singing third-rate songs, while working in the kitchen and rocking the child to sleep. If children find this behaviour in their parents, they have every reason to copy the same. And in such homes, where children grow without a cultural background, they fall an easy prey to Christian propaganda also.

There was a case of a child aged 8 or 9 who came in holidays to the house. On being told to observe vrata on Krishna Janmashtami Day, the child asked the parents, “Why do you celebrate the birthday of such an adulterous fellow? Why not celebrate the birthday of Christ?” Can you imagine a child of 8 or 9 confronting its parents with such obnoxious questions? Let our mothers make the children wake up early in the morning, make them salute the elders in the family and offer worship to the family deity. The sacred responsibility of instilling Matrubhakti, Deshabhakti and Daivabhakti in every Hindu boy and girl is upon our mothers.

Dress, For Samskars

Then about the dress. It must be borne in mind that the dress and decorative items also leave their imprints on the young minds. Mothers should see to it that the children acquire traits of our culture through these things also.

I am again reminded of my early childhood. I had long, thick and curly hairs. My mother would often do my hair and stick a peacock feather over it in such a fashion as to make me appear as Bala-Krishna. She would put on a garland round my neck and tell others, “See, how our Madhu appears, exactly like the child Krishna.” Such things, apparently though small, help to mould the childs psychology in tune with our cultural standards. If, on the other hand, the children are brought up in the European style the impressions carried by them will also be colored similarly. Seeds of intense devotion to the motherland and its cherished values would not sprout on such a mental background.

How “Woman” Became Soldier!

Sometimes, people have no idea as to what a decisive influence the garment would have on the mind. There is an interesting

incident during the days of First World War. The English, who were ruling here, promulgated an emergency order recalling all the old and retired soldiers to join the army. There was a soldier who had no desire to go back to army. He remained in his village. The police came with a search warrant to take him away. When the soldier came to know of this he put on a womans clothes and hid himself in the house. When the police came, his wife told them that he was not in the house and that she and her sister alone were in the house. But the police suspected deception. They called out that “sister”, found out the truth and took him away. The soldier was sent to his old platoon. He was then given the army dress and made to join the ranks. When he stood there with the soldiers dress on, he was asked whether he would like to return home. He replied with a new resolve in his voice that he was now a soldier, that there was no question of his going to the house; he would now only go to battlefield. Indeed, the dress had made all that world of difference!

Toll of “Modernism”

And then about our family traditions and devotional practices. Whatever be our personal or family deities, we have to conduct its worship with great devotion and keep aglow our holy family traditions. How tragic it is to see these things disappearing nowadays! In the South, at least, we often see the Tulasi Brindavan in front of our houses. As dusk sets in, our mothers light a lamp in front of it. Often we, listen to the sweet sounds of bells in the pooja-griha and witness the devotional worship going on there. But in the North, this has become a rare sight to see. “Modernism” has verily banished God from our homes.

“Modernism” is taking the toll of many more of our cherished values of life. A couplet in Jnaneshwari says, “A pious man spreads a cover of modesty over his good actions just as a virtuous lady covers her body.” It describes the nature of virtuous

womanhood. But “modern” women think that “modernism” lies in exposing their body more and more to the public gaze. What a fall!

It appears modernism has come to mean, in our country, only blind aping of the West and nothing else. In many of the modern families the children address their mothers as mummy. Do we know what the word originally conveyed? In Egypt, there are massive cemeteries entombing their old kings. They are called pyramids. The corpses placed inside are called mummies! And here we address our living, loving mothers as mummies!

Epics in Heroic Motherhood

As we are well aware, our nation is beset with ever so many perils. Attempts to undermine the integrity of our motherland and our society are on. Challenges to the time-honoured values of our spiritual heritage are mounting. Conflicts and confrontations are thick in the air. Under such conditions, what is the type of training that we have to impart to our children? Shall we teach them to seek safety in their homes and not to stir out? Should we harp upon things pertaining to their own happiness and future and task them out not to “dabble in other things? What shall we teach?

There is a beautiful anecdote narrated in Mahabharata. There was a queen by name Vidula. She sent her son Sanjay to the war-field but the fellow became nervous and terror-stricken. He turned his back to the enemies and galloped to his capital. When Vidula saw her son in that crestfallen state she closed the entrance to the fort and severely chastised him. That conversation between the mother and the son has become famous as Vidula-Sanjay-Samvad, wherein Vidula instructs her son as to how a brave warrior should conduct himself on the battlefield. She then orders him to go back to war and return as a victorious hero. As the story goes, Sanjay

sallied forth into the battlefield, displayed exemplary valour and came back to be received by his mother with honour.

The words of Kunti when the five Pandavas came to seek her blessing before proceeding to give battle are remarkable for their heroic tone. She says:

“Yadartham kshatriya soote
Tasya kaaloyamaagatah
Na hi vairam samaasaadya
Seedanti purusharshabhaah”

(*The moment has arrived for which Kshatriya mothers give birth to sons. Lion-hearted men are not cowed down in the face of enemies.*)

There is one more couplet in Mahabharata which says: may no woman give birth to one who would mutely suffer insults, who is devoid of vigour and manly prowess and one who would bring joy to the enemies.

Impress the Right Values

Further, let there be the impress of national pride in all that is ours. Make a vow of Swadeshi in all the daily household uses. That will make for unsullied national character. Aping of the glare of Western civilization would spell ruin to the matchless traditions of nobility and chastity set up by the daughters of this soil.

The Hindu was known for his unflinching devotion to truth and sterling character. But these days even our big leaders have become notorious for their corruption and moral decay. It is up to our mothers to save our younger generation from such corrosive influences. They should so cultivate the atmosphere in home as

would make one gladly prefer to forego a meal, rather than accept immoral gratification. The family as a whole should pledge themselves not to partake of the sinful food procured by corruption.

If our mothers were to inculcate such wholesome and heroic traits in their children, surely the coming generation would be able to successfully meet the various challenges being faced by our country.

If Social Cohesion is Lost

Then, there is the question of our attitude towards the society. It is clear that the security and happiness of personal and family life depend very much upon the well-being of the society. Indeed without social peace and security even the moral and spiritual advancement of individuals become beset with obstacles. It becomes difficult even for the spiritually great to survive if society disintegrates. As such, it is a duty of first importance for us to see that social life is made healthy.

In the past, we ignored this aspect of keeping our social life intact, free and self-respecting. We forgot that we have to live as one integrated entity. Notwithstanding our tremendous manpower we succumbed to the feeling of being alone. Once there was a mammoth meeting of 20 thousand people in Nagpur. All of a sudden someone raised the cry Oh, they have come! Immediately the huge crowd began to disperse in frantic hurry. People fled leaving behind their chappals. Someone asked a fleeing person what had happened. He said, “ I do not know. All were scared and I too ran.” But why did you not stop and inquire what it was all about? To that he replied: What could I do? I was all alone?

True Yajna

That is the result of the absence of the oneness, of our being the children of one single society who have to share the joys and sorrows of each other. Our love and adoration for society must be expressed in a concrete shape. For instance, there are so many in our society who go without their daily food. Do we feel for them? Do we strive to do something for them? In the past there used to be Balivaishwadeva Yajana where the poor and the hungry used to be fed first, then the rest. Today, we can, and we should, at least keep apart a handful of grains every day to feed the hungry in society and then only take our food. That would be the real Balivaishwadeva sacrifice.

Duty Towards Neighourhood

There is a special burden upon our mothers of serving our needy sisters in society. True, a majority of our mothers will not be in a position to go to far-off places to carry on social work among the distressed and the destitute. However, this does not mean that they should sit back in their homes all the while. They could establish useful contacts among the womenfolk in their own neighbourhood and carry out programmes, which would inculcate our cherished ideas among them and their children. The spirit of mutual help and service would also have to be made popular through our day-to-day social intercourse. Our womenfolk should not be allowed to develop inferiority complex or a feeling of helplessness. They should be taught that they are the living emblems of parashakti.

There are quite a few of our educated mothers who have spare time and energy, which is often wasted in gossip of fashionable clubs. Here is one useful hint for them. There will be many small boys and girls in their neighbourhood who do not go to schools. They can make such children gather either in their own house or in some other convenient place and engage them in games, stories, songs, etc.

Service to needy

We see scattered all around us a number of our sisters who are either engaged in physical labour or are totally helpless and handicapped. When we see such a sight our hearts should melt and well up with deep compassion and motherly affection. We have to chalk out suitable projects, which would give them some useful employment and enable them to earn a livelihood. It is our sacred duty to see that none of our sisters and mothers will be left on the streets uncared for.

Literacy campaign among women is one more important programme, which our educated mothers alone can successfully tackle. But here also, inculcating noble samskars in them should be given the priority, teaching of alphabets should come second. In order to do this, instill in them a spirit of pure devotion to our motherland, faith in our Dharma and pride in our history. Show them the map of our sacred motherland, the holy streams and mountains, the Tirthas and temples stretching right form the Himalayas to Kanyakumari. Introduce them to the rich variety of our national life in language, literature, art and social traditions. Thus make them become intimate with the true spirit of our national being.

Invoke Spirit of Savitri

I am sure, if our mothers make a resolve to uplift the society, then there is no power, either in this world or the other, which can defeat them. The ideal of Savitri, before whom even the Lord of Death accepted defeat, is before them. May they all invoke within themselves such single-minded devotion to the ideal, such purity of character and such peerless heroism!

Once we do this, I am sure, the long night will pass and a new dawn will spread its golden hue over the horizon of not only

Bharat but over the entire world with the renewed effulgence of our Dharma.

And this is also what Gandhiji has foreseen for the future of our Dharma. He says:

"*Hinduism is a relentless pursuit after Truth, and if today it has become moribund, inactive, irresponsive to growth, it is because we are fatigued; and as soon as the fatigue is over, Hinduism will burst forth upon the world with a brilliance perhaps unknown before.*"

32. We And Our Students

It does not seem right to regard the students as community different from the rest of the society. The qualities of the people in general manifest in the younger folk, that only due to the immaturity, inexperience and preponderance of emotions in them; such qualities manifest themselves as an uncontrolled outburst. The general lack of training in codes of good behaviour, sense of uncertainty and insecurity in life resulting in a sort of frustration, want of any ideal to strive for and the none-too-edifying example of those who are projected as leaders and guides of the people, the crumbling down of the institution known as "home" are some of the causes contributing to the "ferment", the disquietude and unbridled behaviour, which we name as indiscipline in the young folk, who constitute our students.

One people " Three Faces

Our people may be broadly classified into three major divisions:

(a) Those who for generations have been ground down by penury, want of education and what is worst, social disabilities. Fortunately the Government has taken up the work of spreading education, at least of the primary stage, and the students from this segment are getting the advantage. These students need careful and loving attention conducive to inculcating good qualities and awakening their dormant abilities, for they have little background of proper bringing up. In a way theirs is a clean slate with the inevitable scratches dug into them by their hard life " deprived of the light of knowledge, of the happiness of wealth and of the sense of being equal partners in the building up of our national life. These are the hope of the future and have to be nurtured with special solicitude.

(b) The people in average circumstances. These have always been the backbone of the peoples life in all its aspects. Due to queer but natural desire to appear respectable, they take to a way of life not commensurate with their means. The present economic conditions have hit them hard. Peace of mind and household peace have disappeared. They see no hope in the future for themselves or their children. This condition can produce all types of perversities. The young folk from this class form the bulk of our student population and this life of no hope but of only despair, mars their otherwise good mental make-up. Out of such desperation any kind of irresponsible activity can attract the youth.

(c) Those who enjoy affluence and respectability. An overdose of wealth, the position and power accompanying it, is sufficient to turn anyones head, more especially in the unripe youth who have little experience, little knowledge and in whom the quality of discrimination is still in the embryonic stage. These conditions can completely wreck the moral fabric of the young folks' life, as has been aptly expressed in the Sanskrit verse:

"Yauvanam dhanasampattih
Prabhutvamavivekita
Ekaikamapyanarthaaya
Kimu yatra chatushtayam"

Life of frugality, austerity during the formative student days, giving no opportunity for the mind to indulge in unhealthy enjoyments and vicious habits - such precautions may help keep them away from undesirable activities and behaviour.

Stress on Spirit, not Form

To convert this great mass of our youth into virtuous citizens devoted to building up of potential on right lines, is the real problem. It cannot be solved by superficial thinking and superficial remedies.

For example, the questions about the educational institutions, the teacher-student ratio and relationship, hostel arrangements, etc., cannot be said to go to the root of the problem. Rather than the way the institutions run, thought has to be devoted in the first instance to the aim and content of education, to the standard of quality of the teachers, of the wardens of the hostels, to the general environment in the country, and a serious attempt made to remedy them.

Our education is merely informative and not formative. The emphasis is on somehow equipping oneself to earn a living and not on drawing out the personality of the youth. The ideal of improving "the standard of living" relates only to material well-being, multiplication of wants and means of satisfying the carnal and lower mental cravings of the animal in man. It does not relate to developing the mental, intellectual and the higher aspects of the human being. The natural result is the production of an inordinate desire for amassing the aids to such enjoyments by whatever means possible. The expression "cultural activities" has come to denote singing, dancing and such other activities which easily rouse the baser instincts of man; its real significance of activities conducive to evolving and developing the higher qualities of the head and heart, qualities which inculcate the correct sense of values and restraint upon one's emotions and impulses, seems to have been completely ignored or considered unnecessary or unworthy of being imbibed.

Man-making Education

Without dilating upon this aspect, suffice it to say the whole system of education seems to need a complete change. Every student must be taught the basic principles of Dharma, the life history of great ancestors who lived and demonstrated those high principles, the correct and true history of our people with the story

of our national heritage in its noblest aspect. He must also be given some preliminary training in the science of mind-control through simple yogic exercises. The rest of the education has necessarily to relate to the surroundings, facts of day-to-day life, to each individual's aptitudes so as to equip him to successfully face the trials and tribulations in life. From the very beginning the emphasis should be on duty in all relationships. Absolute sense of duty is most desirable but if in the present atmosphere of pampering the self it seems impracticable, the truth that duty is supreme and the individual's or group's rights are only co-related to it and must be considered as subordinate to it, must be persistently impressed upon the minds of the young in their formative years.

The Ideal that Inspires

To achieve this end of inculcating a correct sense of duty, our system of education needs to be ideal-oriented. The word 'ideal' is likely to give rise to differences and disputations and there may be experienced disagreement and divergence about its meaning. But I hope all will agree on certain broad fundamentals. The human being is a wayfarer on the path to the ultimate Supreme Reality (how it is conceived of and what is chosen as the path is immaterial in this context). That reality can be attained by devoted and selfless service. It is through service to Man that we can serve the Reality. Service to man has to begin with service to the people with whom we have a natural bond of affinity of ancestry, heritage, tradition, national entity and grateful devotion to the holy motherland which fosters us all and common devotion to which unites us all in one National Personality. These are our basic ideas or aspects of our Common Ideal. A firm grounding in dedication to this one Ideal is calculated to induce community of will, of mental and intellectual co-ordination. When coupled with this co-ordinated will, co-ordinated and controlled physical activity makes what is known as discipline. Military training can

produce co-ordinated action on the physical plane. It is good so far as it goes and to that extent is a necessary complement to education. From the impressionable school-going age graded military training needs to be imparted culminating in advanced courses in college days. Naturally such training need not be up to the standard necessary for the armed personnel. But mere military training cannot by itself inculcate the real spirit of discipline unless concerted efforts are made to instil the discipline of will which is born out of common devotion to one great Ideal.

The Right Surroundings

All amenities granted in the educational institutions and hostels have to be directed towards this goal. The amenities available today are to the nature of relaxation and pleasure hunting. These also have a place in student life. But the whole atmosphere needs to be charged with the spirit of learning, of making one's contribution to knowledge, of the pious ambition to making one's mark in the service of the ideal. I think that suitable extra-curricular activities have to be provided in the form of sports and physical exercises, in the form of arts, of pictures, of trips and outings, of participation in physical labour needed in actual life for following the various professions, in the form of service rendered to society presently living in less favourable conditions.

Teacher to the Fore

This will need constant guidance and supervision by teachers and wardens of hostels. Naturally the teachers have to be competent, well-versed in the subjects they teach, of unimpeachable character and of a disposition loving and also capable of establishing homely relationship with the youth. A teacher constantly haunted by the fear of penury, constantly afflicted by the necessity of augmenting his slender means to feed the members of his family and maintain an appearance of respectability, overloaded with

work and burdened with the responsibility of looking after a crowd of young folk, cannot be expected to come up to the required standard. His economic condition has to be improved and he should have a limited number of students to look after. Our experience is that one person can conveniently and efficiently take care of between 16-24 wards. This ratio has to be established to achieve the desired results. The same is true about the wardens of the hostels also.

Home A Moulding Centre

Under the stress and strain of economic conditions and with the growth of industrialization, the institution of the "home" has broken down. The parents and guardians have little time or energy to look after their wards. Much cannot be expected out of them. Yet their maintaining a peaceful, loving family life, following virtuous religious life, performing with proper decorum their traditional rites at least in some minimum degree and training the children to participate in those with faith, devotion and a sense of duty, will go a long way towards inculcating good conduct and discipline in them. Other individuals such as neighbours may also be helpful by setting up a standard of good behaviour in their own lives.

Children learn by imitation. The lives of the teachers, wardens, parents and neighbours have their impact upon their impressionable minds. They have to realise this and mould their life properly.

The Right Leadership

The general atmosphere in the country has also to be taken into consideration. The whole atmosphere is vitiated by an inordinate emphasis on the political and economic aspects of life. Persons in these fields are projected as the leaders and ideals of society. It

will be difficult to say that their character and conduct is worthy of emulation, barring some rare exceptions. Day in and day out a ferment is on, agitations fanning people's emotions - often not very noble - are launched and persons of not a very commendable moral calibre are thrown up as leaders and ideals. It is unnatural to expect that agitations where passions are roused will leave the impressionable, emotional youth with abundance of energy, cold and unaffected. The promoters of agitations, desirous of strengthening their movements by adding to the number of participants to make them effective, cannot but be tempted to exploit this volatile youthful force.

It will be seen that most of the students' unions are working under the guidance or patronage of one or other of the many political parties, because the political agitations can, through such unions, have this force ready at hand to follow their behests. This state of affairs must change. Politics and political parties may be studied by the elder students from an impartial and academic point of view, but they should not allow parties or party leaders to interfere in their union activities. In the country's general political atmosphere also a change is called for; the agitational approach to problems must give way to a constructive one born out of discussions, mutual understanding and readiness to accommodate one another's view and finding out a peaceful solution to them. The role of those in charge of the Government in this context is of prime importance. If they do not pay proper respect and consideration to opinions other than their own and remain stubbornly averse to making reasonable concessions to such opinions, agitations will go on and with them student indiscipline, in ever-increasing proportions.

Unions for Channelising Youthful Energy

The unions have, therefore to be wholly divorced from political or other agitational parties and their activities guided into healthy

channels for developing knowledge, spirit of service, dignity of physical labour, spirit of camaraderie and of community life. Closing down unions is no remedy. Unions have to be encouraged especially at the college stage (at the school stage the students are too unripe to understand and operate union activities), for they give an opening to the excess of energy which the young posses. The channels into which their activities can be diverted with benefit have already been indicated elsewhere.

Elevating Role for Press & Publicity

The press is merely a reflection of the life of the people. All evils in the society readily find expression through the papers. The emphasis upon politics and upon the material aspect of life, which is today eating into our vitals, finds pointed and magnified expression there. Sensationalism and gloating over stories of sin and crime also find a place of pride in them. A complete change in this attitude is called for. Instead of giving excessive importance to politico-economic aspects and instead of projecting only such persons as indulge in this as ideal personalities to be emulated, the press will do a great service to the country, if they give due importance to those devoted to the service of God and humanity, whose lives, though not possessed of glamour, are spotlessly pure and tirelessly engaged in selfless action and hold these forth as really worthy of being imitated and followed. I think, however, that it is periodicals and magazines, which can do this properly. Form daily newspapers it is too much to expect.

Audio-visual methods of education have been acclaimed and rightly as efficacious in imparting instructions and moulding character. But the power of these methods is abused by advertisers in the papers, on walls, kiosks and places which easily catch the eye, abused by dinning into the ears of the public unseemly songs over the loud-speakers, through the radios and transistors. Voluptuous pictures and songs meet the eye and ear at

every step. How these must be corroding the moral fabric of the youth can easily be imagined.

Basic Reorientation - Need of the Hour

But in the name of progress all this goes on without let or hindrance. The result of all this inordinate emphasis on material, political and sensual propensities is seen in the shattering of all moral and ethical values. The present-day leadership, the atmosphere built up by them and the false notion that satisfaction of animal appetites is the end-all and be-all of modernism, of progressiveness and development, have contributed to make the people and more especially the growing generation amoral. Morality is good; immorality though bad has one good quality - the understanding of moral values and realisation of having deviated from them. But non-morality is positively a danger, for there is callous disregard for both the moral and the immoral. The immoral, the sinful have a chance of turning over a new leaf, but the amoral become impervious to all sense of right and wrong; as such theirs is an irretrievable case. Such persons are extremely dangerous to the right evolution of the society.

A thorough reorientation in the processes of thinking, in establishing values of life and proper apportioning of importance to the various aspects which together go to make a full life for the individual and consequently for the nation, is the need of the hour. Want of this is at the root of all our social evils including student indiscipline. It will serve no useful purpose to separate this one question from the lager context and try to remedy it. If this reorientation is not immediately taken in hand seriously, other remedies will remain merely superficial and ineffective.

PART FOUR

MOULDING MEN



33. The Technique That Succeeds

For True National Reorganisation

An ideal requires a method, a process for its realisation in actuality. Today all around us we witness various types of techniques being adopted by several organisations. Even at the time of the founding of our organisation these different methods of work were in vogue. And it was not that Dr. Hedgewar, the founder of the Sangh, was unaware of those systems when he evolved this particular technique for our organisation. On the contrary, for quite a long time before he started the Sangh, he was in the thick of the activities of those organisations and was well acquainted with their techniques.

Why then did he start a separate organisation with a separate technique? Is it because he wanted credit and applause for himself as the founder and leader of an independent organisation? Nothing could be farther from truth. Doctorji had received enough applause on other platforms. With the spirit of boundless sacrifice, tremendous energy of action and flash of genius it was mere child's play for him, had he so desired, to get the highest political prizes of the land. But he gave up all that and started this silent and unassuming type of organisation.

In Search of the Right Path

What then is the reason that prompted him to plough this fresh furrow in the national field? Being of a fiery patriotic temperament right form his boyhood, his first fascination was naturally for the revolutionary movements of the day. He had, as a matter of fact, chosen the medical course at Calcutta in spite of untold personal hardships only with a view to diving deep into that movement, as Calcutta was then the seething volcano of

revolutionary activities. He lived in the dangerous under-currents of that volcanic lava, but kept his discerning eye ever wide open. Though his heart throbbed in unison with the flaming hearts of those revolutionary comrades, he found their method wanting as an effective instrument for total national regeneration. Their secret and lightning movements, their daring exploits and glorious martyrdoms evoked the highest admiration in his fiery bosom but his calm brain refused to be blinded by the flash of such revolutionary sparks.

He knew that a handful of secret workers, deprived of direct contact with the people, could play but a very limited role in rousing and organising a whole nation. Further, he had observed that most of the revolutionary plots and secrets had met with disaster by the cropping up of informers and traitors every now and then from even amongst their top cadres, thus undoing at one stroke the glorious heroism and sacrifices of countless revolutionaries. Without a trained core of extremely strong-willed, disciplined and patriotic men, no revolution could be expected to succeed in blowing up an organised and mighty state machinery such as the British had built in our country.

After Doctorji returned to Nagpur from Calcutta, he plunged into the freedom movements of the Congress. Under the leadership of Lokamanya Tilak, the Congress was fast becoming a movement of the masses. The age of armchair politicians was gone. A new era of mass resistance of the British had set in. The spirit of swaraj was in the atmosphere. After Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi spread the fire far and wide and lit up the torch of resistance in every town and village. Gandhiji with his unimpeachable character, his spirit of utter selflessness and fearlessness, his simple yet effective techniques touching the heart of the common mass of people roused the nation to new heights of struggle and sacrifice. Pandit Nehru with his burning idealism and dynamism was coming up as the inspiring symbol and spearhead of the

proud and independent spirit of the rising generation. By the efforts of such stalwarts the country was caught in a wave of intense anti-British upsurge. Doctorji too was in the forefront bearing the brunt. He defied the foreign rulers and courted hard terms in prison. At the same time, he continued his close scrutiny of movement and found to his disappointment some grave defects, which, he feared would be the undoing of all its cherished aspirations in the long run.

In both the movements he had observed that the main incentive was the anti-British spirit with no positive vision of national freedom. That was the case with not only the general mass of the people but with most of the leaders as well. And without a positive conviction of our national life, those movements, in course of time, were bound to drift into reactionary channels.

Secondly, they could give no answer to a question, which had haunted Doctorji since his very boyhood. How could a handful of foreigners, Muslim or British, subjugate us and rule over us for such a length of time? Ousting the British was all right, but what was the root malady, which had resulted in that foreign domination? If, as it was clear, our own disunity was responsible for our slavery, then would these terrorist and agitational methods remedy that root malady? Could abiding oneness of the people be created by revolutionary shocks and mass upsurges? Could all the evil tendencies such as selfishness, lack of discipline and absence of national consciousness, which had been eating into the vitals of our people for the last so many centuries and had resulted in foreign domination, be wiped out at one stroke?

And again, without the people being rooted in the positive and sustaining virtues of an organised national life, would it be advisable to work up mass fury on the basis of mere antagonism? In Shakespeare's Julius Caesar, after Caesar is assassinated by his own comrades, and Brutus and Cassius ride on the crest of

popular upsurge, Caesar's friend Antony cleverly manipulates the mob fury and turns its tide against the assassinators themselves. As the wild mob turns in their hot pursuit, Antony comes out with the famous remark, "Mischief, thou art afoot. Take thou what course thou wilt." That is the disastrous drawback - 'thou wilt' and not as 'we will' - of all such mass upsurges without a corresponding countrywide organisation based on positive national life-values and capable of directing and controlling the movement.

For a Mental Revolution

After deep cogitation along these lines, Doctorji concluded that a total revolution in the mental attitude of the people was the vital need of the hour. It was mental revolution and not a physical revolution that was the panacea for all our nation's ills including the foreign domination. He was aware that the task of bringing about a total transformation in the attitudes and thought - processes and behaviour of the whole people by taking individual after individual and moulding him for an organised national life, demanded a perseverant, silent and single-minded approach free from all public fanfare and propaganda.

National reorganisation means fostering those traits which build up national character and cohesion. It is directed towards awakening a passionate devotion to the motherland, a feeling of fraternity, a sense of sharing in national work, a deeply felt reverence for the nation's ideals, discipline, heroism, manliness and other noble virtues. This work of moulding minds and building character cannot be done by sermons or administering pledges. The spirit of devotion to the nation has to be a steady flame, burning day in and day out and year after year. And so people should gather daily and regularly in an environment congenial to its growth. Having this in view, our founder finally evolved the present framework of organisation.

The Scene that Inspires

The first thing that strikes the eye in our method is its day-to-day programme. There is an open playground. Under a saffron flag, groups of youths and boys are absorbed in a variety of Bharatiya games. Resounding shouts of joyous enthusiasm fill the air. The sight of the daring young men pressing forward with the cry 'Kabaddi, Kabaddi' on their lips thrills the heart. The leader's whistle or order has a magical effect on them; there is instant perfect order and silence. Then exercises follow - wielding the lathi, Suryanamaskar, marching, etc. The spirit of collective efforts and spontaneous discipline pervades every porgramme. Then they sit down and sing in chorus songs charged with patriotism.

Discussions follow. They delve deep into the problems affecting the national life. And finally, they stand in rows before the flag and recite the prayer:

“Namaste sadaa vatsale Matrubhoome”

(*Many salutations to Thee, O loving motherland!*) whose echoes fill the air and stir the soul. 'Bharat Mata ki jai' uttered in utmost earnest furnished the finishing and inspiring touch to the entire programme.

Throughout the length and breadth of Hindusthan, not only in towns and cities but in far-off hamlets, hills and dales, these inspiring scenes and soul-stirring songs greet us regularly and punctually at the time of sunrise, sunset or at night every day. We call it 'Shakha'.

The real spirit of our work will be understood when one comes in contact with the Shakha. Once a dignitary came to preside over one of our functions at Nagpur. He frankly confessed, "I was

highly sceptical about the work of the Sangh all these years. I used to confront its workers with a thousand and one questions. But today, having seen the Sangh, myself, all my doubts and suspicions have vanished." Practically every place that has a Shakha has a similar story to tell.

The reason for this is simple. The Shakha is the living practice of principles and not a bundle of dry preachings. The picture of earnest and devoted men, young and old, engaged in the daily sadhana gives an eloquent, though silent, message of the work which no spoken or written work can ever adequately convey.

Planners Galore!

The inevitable need of the silent and intensely practical aspect of the Sangh and its concentration on the moulding of hearts as living limbs of our national being will become apparent when we contrast it with the atmosphere prevailing outside.

Once I met an elderly gentleman. He began telling me that he knew all about our organisation and it was, in fact, he who gave that plan to Dr. Hedgewar! He also showed me the notes detailing his ideas about the ideal method of organisation. Then I just asked him, "You have spent all your active life in this place. Can you just tell me how many friends you have here who will stand by you under any circumstance?" He replied with evident disdain, "There is not even a single fellow here worthy of my friendship. All are sinful wretches." Then I told him jokingly, "At least, should you not have four persons to carry your body on the final day?"

Our country is today infested in every sphere of life with such 'expert planners', 'preachers' and 'advisers' and their 'learned' discourses and exhortations. It is well known that people devoid of a strict and unflagging adherence to a practical technique to

achieve the cherished goal degenerate into tall talks and low habits.

The Image for Worship

Together with its all-out emphasis on the practical aspect of the work, the Sangh has bestowed profound thought on evolving a proper framework of technique that will be effective in the achievement of its ideal. Without a suitable technique no ideal, however great, can be realised. Even in our various sects, each individual has a definite emblem in keeping with his particular sect. He dresses and adorns himself in a particular manner, recites a particular mantra and follows a particular code of discipline. A Shaiva, a Shakta or a Vaishnava, each has his own method of worship, his own ritual, his own codes and conventions regulating his life.

We too have evolved a technique, an emblem, a 'mantra' and a code of discipline in keeping with our ideal of an unified and disciplined national life. The great and inspiring emblem that we have chosen is the immortal Bhagawa Dhwaj which brings before our eyes living image of our ancient, sacred and integrated national life in all its pristine purity and entirely crossing all superficial barriers of province, sect, creed, caste, language and custom. Since times immemorial, it has been the symbol of our dharma, our culture, our traditions and ideals. It embodies the colour of the holy sacrificial fire that gives the message of self-dissolution in the fire of idealism and the glorious orange hue of the rising sun that dispels darkness and sheds light all around. It has been the one guiding star to all our endeavours, material as well as spiritual, the one unfailing witness to the penance of yogis and the sacrifices of heroes and symbolised the dreams of countless millions of this land all through the ages. In short, it has been the highest, the noblest and the truest symbol of our nationhood.

Worship Ideal, Not Individual or Book

The sangh has taken up this living symbol as its guiding light - the guru. When Doctorji placed this flag before us as our guru, as our ideal, quite a few of his co-workers raised their eyebrows. Having seen the ideal in flesh and blood in the form of Doctorji himself, they queried, "Why not look upon Doctorji himself as our ideal?" But our founder, in keeping with the spirit of the organisation, placed the immortal Bhagawa as our ideal. No individual, however great, can be the ideal for a nation. The individual is after all a fleeting entity in the eternity of national life. However great, he can at best reflect a fraction of the beauty and fragrance of the full bloom of the national life over the centuries. Moreover, it is futile to expect that all people will cherish the same devotion towards a particular person, however noble and venerable he may be. Some worship Sri Rama as their Chosen Deity whereas some others look upon Sri Krishna as their God and so on. Therefore the Sangh has kept a symbol which is at once universal and all-absorbing in its appeal.

The tragedy of movements, which revolved solely around individuals for their inspiration and ideals is there for all to see in the history of nations the world over. The curse of personality cult and the rise of dictators that have scarred the face of humanity have been due to the idolizing of individuals to the neglect of ideals. Our culture has always commanded us to look upon the individual as great and worthy of our adoration only to the extent he expresses an ideal in his life. In the whole wide world it is our dharma alone that is not based on the historicity or authority of any single individual.

The other special feature of our heritage is that no book is taken as the single supreme authority for our dharma and samskriti. All our scriptural texts are only expositions of the several aspects and paths to the One Goal of human life. The Sangh too has not

accepted or prepared any book to serve as its sole authority. Once a prominent religious leader asked me, "Which is the text you follow?" I replied, "If we confine ourselves to the word of a book, then we will be no better than Muslims and Christians whose religion stands on a book. And so our devotion is to the ideal and to nothing less as nothing else."

It is in keeping with that sublime cultural tradition that the Sangh has kept before itself neither an individual nor a book as its authority but Bhagawa Dhwaj, the glowing symbol of all that is good and great in our national life, and through that, is striving for the inculcation of pure devotion to the nation as a whole.

Crucible of National Reorganisation

It is in the sanctifying presence of the Bhagawa Dhwaj that the day-to-day activities of the Shakha are carried on. All sections of our people gather there. Forgetting all superficial distinctions of language, province, caste, community, party or sect, they gather as children of a common motherland and play in her sacred dust. They pray to the motherland in deep veneration. They resolve to lay down their lives for her glory. As they play and sing, a feeling of oneness brings them together. As they perform exercises together and march together, their hearts begin to throb in unison.

More important than the programme is the atmosphere. An air of sweetness and sanctity pervades the atmosphere. In course of time amidst the wide variety and diversity of the assembling persons, a wholesome unity emerges. The spirit of amity and harmony strikes root in their minds. And the inspiring dream of national unity submerging social, political, economic and other divisions becomes a living reality. Thus the Shakha is the crucible which awaken noble impulses of dedicated patriotic service in our people and binds them together with immortal fraternal bonds. It

is the creative center for sterling national character and lasting national cohesion.

Medium of Mass - Awakening

Besides, the tradition of national festival that the Sangh has evolved is a potent medium of awakening the masses to our true and integrated national life.

Varsha Pratipada or Yugadi, the Hindu New Year's Day, awakens in us the memories of our great epoch-makers and their immortal achievements. By a happy coincidence it is also the birthday of our founder. Hindu Samrajya Dinotsav (Jyeshtha Suddha Trayodashi) marks the victory of the resurgent Hindu power over the eight-hundred-year-old oppressive rule of Muslims, under the virile leadership of Shivaji who founded the sovereign national throne on this sacred day in 1674. Guru Pooja (Ashadha Poornima) as the traditional day when the pupil renders homage to his teacher. The Sangh has given it a national character. It is on this day that Sangh worships its guru, Bhagawa Dhwaj, the symbol of our dharma and our nationhood. Raksha Bandhan (Sharvana Poornima) reminds us that we are the children of a common motherland. We tie Rakhi, a symbol of fraternity, on this day. Vijayadashami (Ashwayuja Suddha Dashami) rekindles the memories of the glorious tradition of our victories over the forces of evil. It is also the birthday of the Sangh. Makar Sankraman, which marks the transition in nature from 'darkness to light', holds for us the message to emerge form the darkness of selfishness to the light of national consciousness.

Thus on the one hand, the virtues of national consciousness, character and cohesion are infused into the people by the day-to-day training in the Shakha and, on the other hand, the flame of national awakening is fed by the various national festivals.

Curse of 'Institutionalism'

It is clear from the above description that it is the all-absorbing spirit of devotion to nation in its entirety and not to any individual or institution that is sought to be ingrained in the Sangh. Without that life-spirit, mere attachment to and pride in the external set-up will become one more point of national disruption.

In our past history and even in recent times, we have burnt our fingers having ignored this basic principle of national reorganisation. There had been many attempts in the past in various parts of the country at awakening and organising our people. The great sponsors of those movements had started them with a view to strengthening and unifying society as a whole. But as circumstances changed and the immediate cause for their coming into being was removed, the inner spirit gave place to mere attachment to the external form. As a result, we see many such rigidified sects developing into mutually exclusive and even hostile entities in the present-day atmosphere of selfishness.

For example, during the grueling times of Muslim onslaught, there arose in Punjab a great saint by name Guru Nanak Dev who rekindled amongst the people the dying embers of faith in our ancient dharma. He was followed by a galaxy of nine gurus who lived and died as flaming examples of devotion and sacrifice in the cause of dharma. The tenth guru, Guru Govind Singh, felt that mere revival of dharmic devotion, without heroic action, would be of little avail against the brutal forces of adharma. He changed his followers with an indomitable martial spirit and forged them into a conquering army of heroic warriors. But what a misfortune that today the mission, which inspired that glorious movement is given a go-by and mere attachment to the external form, the institution, has so much hardened as to give rise to perverted notions of separatism laying the axe at the very life-spirit with which it came into being!

Let us take another instance from recent times. In 1947, when the British transferred power to the hands of Congress, the Congress leaders, in defiance of Mahatmaji's advice to disband it, stuck to its name and form to perpetuate themselves in power on the strength of its past credit and goodwill. The result is that today Congressmen, in a bid to stick to their seats of power, feel not the slightest qualms of conscience in descending to any depths of degradation. In order to win over the masses to their fold they rouse their selfishness, tempt them with many a low and immoral gratification, or threaten their opponents and even do them to death.

There is an instance of our own experience. When ban was imposed on Sangh and I was put behind the bars (in1948), I found in my room one morning a number of printed papers meant to serve as apology forms for the Swayamsevaks who had courted imprisonment. The Jail Superintendent who came a little later told me that those forms were supplied to the Swayamsevaks who desired to apologise and go out. I told him, "Of course, none of our persons will ever dream of apologising as they have come here of their own free will and for a cause, which they hold dearer than their own life. But apart from it, what do you stand to gain by such low tactics? When a person is made to break his pledge to a cause, will it not demoralise and immobilise him for the rest of his life? Would such a wreck be beneficial to our national life? One could have understood this method of getting apologies being adopted by the British, for to them, crushing the spirit of our country's youth was essential to perpetuate their rule. But now our leaders say this is swaraj. What then do they achieve by thus trying to shatter the will and morale of our own people?"

Un-Hindu Concept Eschewed

The Sangh therefore has never entertained the idea of building an organisation as a distinct and separate unit within society. Right form its inception the Sangh has clearly marked out as its goal the moulding of the whole of society, and not merely any one part of it, into an organised entity. That is the reason for the Sangh worker's not parading themselves as a 'Sangh group' before the people even when thousands of them work staking their all in times of national catastrophes like famines, floods, flow of refugees from Pakistan, etc. They are content to remain as ordinary members of society and thereby put an example of how even a common man should behave in an alert and organised social life. Such a will-knit, patriotic and self-sustaining national life alone can fortify the nation with overwhelming and everlasting strength.

The idea of building a powerful group within society - sometimes taking the form of a private army - is fraught with grave perils to a free and prosperous national growth. We have witnessed such bodies shooting up like meteors on the political horizon in Germany, in Italy, in Russia and China and establishing totalitarian regimes in their respective countries. It is in the nature of these totalitarian parties to seek to perpetuate their domination on society and to enslave people politically, economically, socially, culturally, and in all other respects. The hair-raising reports of mass purges, brain-washing and slave camps that are going on in Russia and China give us a picture of the state of affairs in such countries. The nation's free expression is thereby choked. The individual is annihilated. And bereft of individual initiative and freedom, the society begins to degenerate.

The idea of domination through brute strength is absolutely alien to our culture and tradition. Our whole being revolts against this un-Hindu concept. Numerous faiths and creeds have flourished here form ancient times. We have had a variegated pattern of political institutions. We have had republican governments and

hereditary kingships. Under all conditions the people were free to follow their healthy persuasions in every walk of life. Everyone was encouraged to develop himself according to his individual genius, nature and inclination. In keeping with that spirit, the work of the Hindu missionaries for rousing and organising the society has always been through love and service, character and sacrifice and never through brute force or political power.

It is this type of elastic and self-expressive pattern of organisation that has helped our society to keep alive its spirit of coherence in spite of being subjected to unparalleled atrocities and aggressions. If the pattern had been rigid and imposed from above, our society would have today remained merely as fossil, just as some of the huge animals became immobile and gradually perished under the dead-weight of their rigid protective covers. The Sangh has therefore rightly eschewed all such self-defeating alien types of organisation and stuck to our pure and healthy national system for rebuilding society.

The Right Approach

The concept of total national reorganisation that the Sangh has been striving to bring into reality naturally implies the non-political nature of its work. After all, a political party can but represent a very small fraction of the people. Nor can national oneness be achieved through elections and political propaganda. Political techniques - and even political power for that matter - can hardly infuse the spirit of devotion, heroism, character, amity and sacrifice in the people. In fact, without having those grass-roots of a well-knit national life, the political parties degenerate into mutual hostility and ruin the national fabric.

Chasing forms, Losing Spirit

That is the unfortunate predicament in which we find ourselves today. Devoid of the living faith in a single national entity and of the supreme consciousness of national interest we find that most of the political parties have become merely breeding-centres for disruptive forces and fissiparous tendencies. We often find them joining hands with avowedly anti-national elements within the country and sometimes even with outside enemy powers in a bid to further their narrow party interests.

One may ask whether it is not desirable to have two parties working in a spirit of healthy competition so that each may act as a corrective to the other and thus keep the national health free from the poison of dictatorship of a single party or a single person. The democratic institution has undoubtedly that saving feature. But even, that will come into play only when the people are firmly rooted in the consciousness of 'nation above party'. Even in those Western countries where the people are steeped in that particular tradition for the past several centuries, parties are not entirely free from mutual rivalry and envy. However, they are able to keep the political pulls within limits and subservient to the higher call of national welfare. For them such institutions do good and add vigour to their life. If a healthy and strong man puts on a shirt made of very fine mulmul, it will appear very nice for him. But if a person whose limbs are lean and thin, his chest gone in and who cannot even stand erect, wears that and tries to strut about, he only makes of himself a laughing-stock in the eyes of others.

For example, compare the conditions of our country with those of England. Some years back, when Pandit Nehru halted at London on his way to America, some of our own countrymen in London went to the aerodrome to stage a black flag demonstration against him simply because they professed to belong to a different party. They forgot that such an act against our Prime Minister in a foreign land was an insult to our nation.

Now, see the instance of England. When Winston Churchill, then the leader of the Opposition in Britain, was touring in America, some persons put him questions about his attitude towards the Labour Government in his homeland. Churchill bluntly replied, "Abroad we are one, whatever our differences at home." Even during the two wars, in spite of the immense suffering and misery the people there had to undergo, no political party tried to make capital out of that situation for its own party ends. The repeated miserable failures of the Communists in that country to save even their deposits in the elections give us an indication of the Britishers' deep-rooted sense of nationalism.

The Lurid Contrast

It is out of a superficial view of the external set-up of institutions in other countries without looking into their inner spirit that some persons ask us, "Countries like England have been progressing and triumphing over difficulties and ordeals even without any special effort such as yours. The people there are engaged in their normal routine life. The political parties carry on the affairs of the country quite successfully. Then, where is the need for a separate organisation such as yours in our country and for the day-to-day training that you are carrying on?"

But there everyone is a born patriot. There is no need even to mention that a particular person is a patriot just as we do not add the prefix 'man' while referring to an individual. That he is a man is taken for granted. But in our country we often hear the word 'patriot' as a special word of tribute applied to certain persons. In England in every one of their institutions - whether a school or a college, a literary club or a youth league, a social meet or cultural body and even at home - the first lesson that every child learns is, "England! With all thy faults, I live thee still!" And here, our great leaders speak of our glorious Himalayas as a place where 'not a blade of grass grows'!

And again see the inspiring tradition of patriotism, which England has set up over centuries. During the whole of the past few centuries there were hardly any traitors. During the Second World War, there was but a single notable case of betrayal. The son of Lord Amery, who was then the Secretary of State for India, has worked for the Germans. After the war, he was tried and sentenced to death. His father would not even think of exerting the influence of his high office to get the punishment lessened. On the other hand, he declined to submit a mercy petition. On the day of his son's execution he even refused to see him, saying that it was a sin to see the face of one who was a blot on the glorious patriotic tradition of their family!

And here? A whole race of traitors right from the times of Dahir and Prithviraj down to the times British rule was born here. And that has continued unabated even to this day. Nowadays treachery has become almost a passport for higher posts in our country. The gentleman who had manoeuvred to divert to Pakistan a shipload of arms bound for our country, when he was our ambassador there, was later appointed as the Governor of one of our States!

There, politics is a healthy sport for them. When the Labour Party was in power, it deputed as its ambassadors the Leader and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition Party to America and China, respectively. Can we ever dream of such a healthy convention on the part of the party in power in our country? Even the third-rate and fourth-rate persons of the ruling party are considered superior to the ablest in other parties. As a result, the entire administration is monopolised by the ruling party. They have not stopped even at that. The state machinery in freely exploited to serve their party interest. Agitations and movements by opposition parties are sought to be suppressed by brutal government measures.

New Untouchability

This is not a recent development either. The present perversion began setting in even as early as 1937 when Congress began tasting the loaves of political power. We know from our own experience that the leaders of Congress were freely associating themselves with the work of the Sangh in the initial stages. Our founder too had participated in Congress movements even after the founding of the Sangh. But after Congress formed ministries in several provinces in 1937, it contracted itself into a political shell, prohibited its members from participating in the activities of the Sangh and introduced the new poison of 'political untouchability' in our body-politic.

Once in 1937, in a province having the Congress ministry, police firing was ordered to suppress a political agitation. A gentleman wrote to the Congress President* asking how a Government run by Congress committed to non-violence could resort to firing. The Congress President replied, "Our policy of non-violence is applicable only towards the British and not towards our people." And that gentleman published the correspondence in papers!

The Radical Cure

With such germs of national disintegration eating into the vitals of our nation, it is useless to expect that mere copying of the political and other institutions of other countries will solve our problems and bring about all-round national rejuvenation. Our malady is far deeper and requires a far more radical cure. It is to root out the basic malady that the Sangh has evolved the method of day-to-day training, the day-to-day inculcation of qualities such as the spirit of sacrifice, discipline and national devotion that go to build a resurgent and unified national life.

Therefore we say, let us come together in Shakha, daily and regularly. It is common experience that if a particular idea is repeated at a fixed hour regularly it goes deep into our being and

becomes an inseparable part of our character. Hence the untiring stress on regularity and punctuality in the Sangh.

There is a small story to illustrate the point. A rich man used to go to his beautiful garden in the afternoon to sit in its cool shade. One day a peacock came and sat on a tree spreading its charming feathers. The owner thought, "How nice it would be if it comes daily at this hour!" He prepared some eatables mixed with a trace of opium and threw them before the peacock. The peacock ate them and felt elated. Next day also, the peacock came remembering that sensation of happiness and the man fed it with another dose of opium. Ultimately the bird was so habituated that it used to come regularly at that hour even without that opium.

That is the nature of the mind. Habit is formed by the regular repetition of an idea in thought, speech and action. Here regularity counts much. Irregularity destroys the formation of good character. There are so many persons who are labouring very hard, working at the anvils or cutting down trees or breaking stones. But none of them becomes a Sandow though they are really undergoing strenuous physical labour. That is because their labour is disorderly and irregular. But a person who takes regular exercise, even with less exertion, can build up his physique and become an athlete. The famous German general Field Marshal Hindenburg, who became the President of Germany after the First World War, was agile and strong even at the age of eighty. When asked about the secret of his remarkable vigour he said that he used to cut wood for about an hour regularly and punctually and was continuing that practice even at that age.

Fate of Momentary Upsurges

It gives us a sense of elation, no doubt, while listening to an inspiring idea or making a resolve to practice a particular thing. But how long does that feeling and resolution last? Is it not

common experience to find our young men making 'solemn resolves' on certain auspicious days to write daily or to take regular exercise and so on and forgetting them on the very next day?

We often come across persons who work by fits and starts. We also find exuberance of people's feelings and emotions on certain occasions. But such temporary upsurges will not help to imprint abiding samskars on people's mind. Nowadays people say that there is a wave of religious awakening all over the country. Religious sermons are broadcast through loudspeakers. Millions gather to take a dip in the Ganga every year. Vast numbers assemble for religious discourses like puranas and harikathas and festivals like Ramanavami, Satyanarayan Pooja, and Ganeshotsav. But are these programmes having the desired effect? Are they able to instil in people's mind the noble resolve to put an end to their present-day self-centred life and to live up to those sacred teachings of character, service and sacrifice?

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa used to remark jocularly about persons going for Gangasnana. "Well, as they approach the holy banks of Ganga, their sins fly from their body and sit on the distant trees. But as soon as they start back after their bath, the sins pounce back upon them!" The moral is, man's character cannot be moulded by mere momentary upsurges of emotions. It is only one in a million who will be endowed with the mental stamina to turn a momentary gush of feelings into an abiding part of his character. That is why, all our great authorities on mental discipline have ordained us not to succumb to overflow of emotions and weep in the name of God but to apply ourselves to a strict discipline of day-to-day penance. Effusion of emotions will only shatter the nerves and make the person weaker than before leaving him a moral wreck. It is just like a liquor-addict who is left imbecile after the effects of liquor subside.

Once an elderly gentleman, after attending one of our meetings, became extremely enthused and announced to his family members that all his family ties were cut and he would thereafter be solely dedicated to the mission of Sangh! Needless to say, after the exuberance subsided he relapsed into his old self-centred life without even so much as remembering that vow of total renunciation!

Acts that Boomerang

Falling a victim to emotional upsurges may also disturb the mental balance to a dangerous extent. Those who cannot restrain their emotions will give vent to them in several undesirable channels. Some will give themselves up in grieving and lamenting; some others indulge in desperate acts harming the interests of the ideal itself. Often such reckless acts even destroy whatever favourable conditions the others might have built up over a long time by their patient toil. There is a tragic instance during the days of freedom struggle of Italy. Garibaldi, Mazzini and other top Italian leaders had forged a secret pact with some French leaders with a view to hastening the achievement of Italian independence. But all of a sudden news reached Mazzini that some one had shot the French emperor. Mazzini was shocked. He exclaimed: "God help us! May the assailant prove to be some one other than an Italian!" However, fate willed otherwise. The assailant turned out to be an Italian. The secret plans of Mazzini and others were dashed to the ground.

The Time-Honoured Technique

What then is the process for imprinting permanent samskars? Psychologists tell us that three factors - firstly, constant meditation on the ideal that is to be formed into a smaskar; secondly, constant company of persons devoted to the same ideal;

and finally, engaging the body in activities congenial to that ideal - are necessary in fashioning the character of a person after the ideal. But for all common people who have to engage themselves for most part of the day in personal and family affairs, earning money, rearing up children and so on, this formula involving all 24 hours of the day is an impractical proposition. Even an all-renouncing yogi cannot remain in the sate of total samadhi for more than three days; his body will fall off after that.

So, the great builders, of the society have introduced a system for the common man embodying the essence of those principles of samskars. And that is, to keep apart a definite period of the day, in the morning, evening or at night and concentrate all the powers and activities of his body, mind and intellect on the chosen ideal at that particular hour regularly and punctually and to remain in the company of similar-minded devotees for at least some period of the day.

The Sangh too has evolved the present technique of Shakha on the same time-honoured pattern of imparting samskars. In consonance with the ideal of national reorganisation, the process of daily samskars inspired by the spirit of Rashtradevo bhava (Be a devotee to Nation-God) is carried on in the Shakha. Charged with that spirit, the various apparently little things like games, wielding of lathi, singing, marching, etc., acquire the potency of instilling deep samskars for an organised and powerful national life.

It is the coming together of little things in an organised manner that goes to make a great thing. "Take care of the pence and the pounds will take care of themselves" is an adage that is true to a letter in the moulding of great characters. Great characters do no come up as ready-made products in a day. They are built silently and steadily, and their glorious heights scaled inch by inch and step by step.

How to Cure Evil?

Bad characters too develop starting with a small lapse somewhere. There is the story of a young man condemned to the gallows for murder. To fulfil his wish his mother came to meet him. But as soon as he saw his mother, he pounced upon her and bit off her ears. He was dragged away and denounced for his brutal behaviour even at the moment of his death. Then he exclaimed that she was the cause of his tragic end! He said, "As a young boy I once stole some money and brought it to my mother. At that time she did not pinch my ears and set me right. From that day onwards, that evil habit grew upon me and I have to suffer its dire consequences today."

There is a small English poem, which I read in my boyhood days, which highlights the importance of little things. The poem which starts with the sentence, "For want of a nail, the shoe was lost", goes on to narrate how "for want of a shoe the horse was lost", then the rider was lost, then the battle was lost and finally the kingdom was lost. The poem ends with the sentence. "And all for want of a horseshoe nail"!

The bad habits and tendencies that have grown upon us for the past several centuries cannot be washed off in a single day. Therefore the daily imprinting of samskars is an urgent necessity. Even the body requires to be washed daily. Then the mind which is far more susceptible to contamination requires to be purified with much more diligence and regularity, as it is continuously in contact with various evil tendencies which are in the air all around us. When Totapuri, the Advaitic Guru of Sri Ramakrishna, was asked why even he, a realised soul, was continuing his daily routine of samskars. He replied that the mind, as long as it exists in this world, is required to be cleansed daily, just as a vessel used for drinking-water needs a daily scrubbing.

The Man-Making Process

The Sangh has therefore evolved a course of samskars wherein the mind, intellect and body of an individual are trained so as to make him a living limb of the great corporate body of society. In a human body, for instance, there are so many limbs and in each limb, millions of cells. Each cell feels its identity with the entire body and is ever ready to sacrifice itself for the sake of the health and growth of the body. In fact, it is the self-immolation of millions of such cells that release the energy for every bodily activity.

The training that is imparted every day in the Shakha in a strictly regulated fashion imparts that spirit of identification and well-concerted action. It gives the individual the necessary incentive to rub away his angularities, to behave in a spirit of oneness with the rest of the brethren in society and fall in line with the organised and disciplined way of life by adjusting himself to the varied outlooks of other minds. The persons assembling there learn to obey a single command. Discipline enters their blood. More important than the discipline of the body is the discipline of the mind. They learn to direct their individual emotions and impulses towards the great national cause. Thus the exemplary discipline that takes shape in the Sangh is self-imposed as it stems from a spirit of intense national dedication. Such a discipline is bound to enrich and bring to blossom the latent potentialities of the individual in harmony with the national good. It is such men, in full bloom of manly virtues, imbued with the spirit of mutual love and co-operation and bound by the bond of self-inspired discipline, all ready to go into action at the same time, who go to build up an inexhaustible reservoir of national strength.

Our One Great Undoing

Discipline is thus a very important factor in national life. Mere assemblage of people with a common goal but without discipline has no power of concerted action. Such an assemblage fails in achieving its goal. Every year lakhs of pilgrims flock to have the darshan of Lord Jagannath at Puri. In that rush many persons fall, break their limbs or get crushed under the feet of others. Such mishaps are quite a common occurrence. Doubtless all of them have a common goal - the darshan of Lord Jagannath. But as there is no order, no discipline, there is only confusion and disaster instead of Jagannath's darshan. That is the experience in all walks of life. A disorderly crowd of even hundreds of person stands nowhere in comparison with a handful of disciplined men in their capacity for work. In our own history we have seen that the British armies could put to rout our armies several times their number. The obvious reason was their superior discipline.

Indiscipline has been our one great undoing in past history. The Third Battle of Panipat in 1761 was a crucial moment for the rising Hindu Swaraj. The great Hindu army was headed by the veteran general Sadashivarao Peshwa and the army of the invaders by Ahmedshah Abdally. When the officers of the Hindu army sat in conference to decide the war strategy, Malharrao Holkar and some others advocated guerrilla warfare to bring the enemy to his knees. But Sadashivarao who had won laurels as a matchless general in pitched battles, decided that a pitched battle would be more effective in smashing the enemy at one stroke. To this Malharrao would not agree, and in anger he withdrew from the war. The rest of the army under Sadashivarao went into battle. There was a critical moment when just a little help from Malharrao Holkar who was at no great distance from the scene of the battle could have turned the eventual disastrous defeat into a great victory and probably changed the whole course of our history. But this army simply kept looking on. And Panipat had to witness the utter rout and ruin of the finest flowers of our Hindu forces. The reason was, those two persons could not agree to a

common course of action, although both had the same goal of throwing out the invader.

Demand of the Times

The spirit of discipline needed for national re-organisation, as visualised by the Sangh, is not merely of the body; it is not of the police or the military type. Once a friend asked me whether our organisation was of the type built by Vikramaditya or the one built by Shankaracharya. I replied that neither would serve the purpose in the present age. The military organisation of Vikramaditya served the limited purpose of throwing out the enemy for the time being and lasted for just over a century. But such a technique can neither unify our people for all time nor infuse abiding national virtues in them. As for the latter technique of intellectual discussions and moral discourses adopted by Shankaracharya, the intellectual honesty, the integrity that was prevalent then is conspicuous by its absence today. The wife of Mandana Mishra could sit as a judge to decide the winner in that famous debate between her husband and Shankaracharya. And she gave her judgement in favour of Shankaracharya! And according to the terms of the debate both Mandana Mishra and his wife embraced sannyas and became his ardent disciples.

But such is not the condition at present. There are very few who are intellectually upright and honest enough to accept what they come to know as right and act up to it. It is our common experience that most of the eminent leaders who bitterly oppose the views of the Sangh in public express their complete agreement in private! We have therefore evolved this unique technique wherein the whole of our people are forged into a self-inspired, well-disciplined and nationally devoted force trained to act fearlessly according to the dictates of their conviction.

Popular Misconceptions

However, there is a lot of misconception regarding this true nature of our discipline. When the people, accustomed as they are to see military and police type of discipline where there is the element of fear of punishment or lure of money and position, see the spirit of stern discipline that pervades the programms of the Sangh and the behaviour of its workers, they begin to say that the Sangh is a semi-military body, a private army and so on. It only betrays their stark ignorance, their incapacity to appreciate the spirit of oneness, comradeship and dedication to a mission which moulds the behaviour of its members for self-restraint and self-imposed discipline.

It is the same ignorance that makes some people ask us, "What is the use of your training in lathi and such outmoded weapons in this age of atomic missiles?" They forget that it is the army that has to receive training in the handling of weapons like atomic bombs and missiles. In no country, not even in America and Russia, are such things allowed to be handled by the common people. Even in those countries, so far as the common people are concerned, training is imparted through elementary physical exercises and simple instruments. Such a training is necessary to instill discipline of the body and the mind in the people.

There are some others - probably finding it rather troublesome to undergo the regular course of our organisation! - who say that they do not desire to be bound by any restrictions, that these are the days of 'individual freedom' and so on. One such gentleman charged the Sangh as being 'fascist' because, according to him, all persons in the Sangh right from Kashmir to Kanyakumari whether aged or in their teens gave the same kind of reply to a question, which indicated that there was no freedom of thought in the Sangh! I asked him, "I say two and two makes four, what do you say?", "Why, of course, four!" he replied. I said, "Then you are not a democrat at all! You have given the same reply as I have and therefore you too are a fascist!" The simple fact that there can

be but one correct reply to any given question did not occur to that gentleman.

It is but natural that the persons in the Sangh imbued with the correct national perspective react spontaneously to the various national problems that arise from time to time in the same manner. To mistake it for mental regimentation is to call the spirit of nationalism itself as an instrument of regimentation! It is the undigested modern ideas like 'freedom of thought' and 'freedom of speech' that are playing havoc in the minds of our young men who look upon freedom as licence and self-restraint as mental regimentation!

Swayamsevak, a Missionary

The discipline nurtured in the 'Sangh is the spontaneous self-restraint of a cultured people. It is a discipline wherein each one feels that he has a higher duty to the nation and that his personal and family wants can wait. He prepares himself to respond to that higher call in a well-ordered, co-ordinated manner. It is the type of discipline where all will pool together their intelligence, feelings, physical energies and their material possessions in the greater cause of national welfare.

It is this spirit of spontaneous and willing self-restraint and self-sacrifice that marks out a person who undergoes training in the Shakha. He is called a 'Swayamsevak'. A Swayamsevak is not a mere volunteer - as is ordinarily understood these days - who moves about in uniform on certain public occasions and participate in physical demonstrations. No, he is not a passive entity simply carrying out some manual work free of charge at the bidding of others. The Swayamsevak is a missionary with a national vision. Intensely aware that he is to work out the great plan of organising a nation torn asunder for the past thousand years with thousand and one considerations, he resolves to

prepare himself for that historic role. He learns to harmonise and direct his natural impulses, emotions and tendencies so as to become an effective instrument for the task of national reconstruction. He effaces from his mind all ideas of selfish gains, of pelf and power, of name and fame, while he serves the nation.

The Brooding Spirit

This spirit is manifest in all the various aspects of the Sangh technique. The Swayamsevaks who participate in the various training camps and conferences, however poor they may be, meet from their own pockets all their expenses. They pay the camp fees, purchase their uniform, spend for their to and fro charges - everything inspired with a spirit of self-reliance and self-sacrifice.

The ancient tradition of Gurudakshina that the Sangh has followed is also in keeping with this spirit. Once a year on the auspicious Guru Poornima day, every Swayamsevak worships the sacred Guru, the Bhagawa Dhwaj, and offers his dakshina (offering of money). The system of fund collection or monthly and yearly subscription has no place in the Sangh. The offerings are made in a spirit of worship. The Swayamsevaks do not even desire that their names and offerings be made public. A Swayamsevak does not in fact consider it a sacrifice at all but a natural duty for which he has no right to expect anything in return, not even name or fame. They are trained in the spirit of the saying of Tukaram:

"Ata urlo upakaaraa purataa"

(*Now I exist only for the service of others*). The words of an inspired poet -

"Teraa vaibhav amar rahe Maa
Ham din chaar rahe na rahe"

(*May your glory, O Mother, remain immortal; it matters little if we survive for a few days more or not.*) - always stir the soul of a Swayamsevak.

But unfortunately, the general atmosphere in our country today presents a dismal contrast. The spirit of 'cashing one's sacrifice', of demanding something in return for one's services is raging everywhere. The craving for name and fame is seen even in the worship of God. We see stones and tablets in temples displaying the names of the donors. Once in my travels a Swami was with me. I found a name inscribed on his vessel. When I asked him the reason, the Swami explained that it was the name of the person who had gifted a large number of such utensils to the Ashram! Can we call this a dan? Any offering made with the object of procuring something in return - even a name - is not an offering but a bargain. In the Sangh, such a mercenary attitude is never allowed to develop. We deem the offering made with real devotion as the noblest and highest, just as Jesus considered the old woman's small coin a nobler offering than the treasures donated to the Temple by persons rolling in wealth.

Foundation for Success

The various systems and conventions evolved in the Sangh are all inspired with this spirit of self-offering. And the one-hour Shakha is the fountainhead of that spirit.

An elderly lady was carrying on the various household works with her left hand only. I asked her the reason. She said that she offered the right hand to God for one year and that it would be used only for His worship. Though a simple vow, how beautifully it symbolises the spirit of devotion to God amidst all the various distracting activities of the day! Verily this is the spirit behind the man-making process of the Shakha involving 'one-hour offering'

that moulds the men participating in that process for dedicated efforts all through their life.

Often people doubt whether this small one-hour programme will be able to bring about the magnificent and all-round transformation of society that the Sangh has conceived of. It has been a common human experience that people follow living example and not dry precepts. And the one-hour training moulds such living images of national character as radiate an irresistible power of drawing people to their path.

There is an illuminating incident in the life of Sri Ramakrishan. Once a lady brought her child to him and requested him to cure the child of its inordinate infatuation for sweets as it was telling upon its health. Sri Ramakrishna asked her to come after a week. She came. But he again asked her to come a few days later. When she again came Sri Ramakrishna called the child near him and said, "Dear child, it is not good to eat much of sweets. Give it up." The child instantly promised to do so. From that day onwards the child gave up sweets. The disciples who had observed this asked Sri Ramakrishns, "Sir, why did you not tell the child not to eat sweets on the very first day, but instead made the lady to come here thrice all the way?" Sri Ramakrishna replied, "Well, I had myself a weakness for sweets. Then how could I advise the child to give up that weakness? Even if I had advised, my words would have failed to impress the child. So I asked the lady to come again. But during that period I could not give any thought to it. So I had to ask her to come once again. After that I gave up attachment to sweets altogether and so I felt myself competent to advise the child."

There is one more fact of human experience and that is, mighty manifestations of power and endeavour are invariably made up of countless small little efforts.

One of our friends narrated his experience after returning from a pilgrimage. He had also visited the tomb of a Muslim peer. The moulvi there would ask the visitors to lift a big stone lying nearby. After they had tried and failed, he would ask all of them to apply their hands to the stone and command them to lift it up with the cry 'Peer Sahib ki jai.' And lo, the stone would go up! That was taken to be a miracle of that peer. After listening to the 'miracle', I called a few Swayamsevaks and asked them to apply a finger each to a stone bigger than that peer's stone. Then I asked them to shout 'Jai' and lift. And what a surprise, the stone rose to a height greater than the 'peer stone'! And the 'miraculous power' of the Peer Sahib lay exposed! The secret of that 'power' lay in the simultaneous and co-ordinated application of small bits of efforts and the shouting of 'Jai' was only an aid. And so can millions of men, offering one hour a day in a spirit of dedicated and disciplined action, move mountains and work miracles in our national life.

Nucleus for Integration

A question arises whether it is practicable to bring the crores and crores of our people on 'Sanghasthan' (Shakha-ground) and make them go through the day-to-day activities of the Shakha. Further, the Sangh is restricted to men only, debarring half of society, i.e., women, from the daily Shakha. Then there is the substantial section of old men and children and many others too who, for various reasons, are unable to go through the regular course of Shakha training. How then are we going to succeed in reorganising the whole society through this day-to-day man-moulding process?

It is to attend to this paramount aspect of work that, apart from the one-hour Shakha, the Swayamsevaks meet our other brethren in society and share in their joys and sorrows and inspire confidence in their hearts by their sterling character, by their spirit of all-

embracing love and disciplined and dedicated service. Men and women, young and old, in the homes of Swayamsevaks and their sympathisers and friends become charged with the spirit of the Sangh. The Shakha becomes the symbol and the spearhead of the collective love and will of the people of the area. Thus steadily and silently, these day-to-day and heart-to-heart contacts during the rest of the day envelop all sections of people - even those who do not actually partake of the training in Shakha - in unbreakable bonds of mutual love and devotion to the national cause.

Ganga Merging in Ocean

Thus with infinite patience and persuasion the Swayamsevaks reach and touch each and every heart, in hamlet and in city. Everywhere they carry with them the same ennobling atmosphere of national oneness. Dissensions born out of apparent difference of language, province, food and dress vanish in their radiating presence. Even in villages and far-off forest abodes they speak to them in the language they understand. They narrate the stories of Rama and Krishna and the examples of our great saints and heroes, engrave the complete picture of our motherland and its sanctity in their minds by reference to the places of pilgrimage spread all over the land, make them conscious of a wide national brotherhood through religious and social functions and thus convert them into an inexhaustible source of national power.

Swayamsevaks also meet at the taluk, district, provincial and all-Bharat levels. Training camps are organised which are practical processes of national integration. Fired with the vision and trained in the technique the Swayamsevaks carry forward the torch of this Rashtra Dharma to every nook and corner of the land. And looking at such lives the people in general too feel inspired to suffer and sacrifice in the cause of the nation. Whether in affluence or in adversity the people are drawn spontaneously into following in their footsteps. The latent energies of a whole people

are thus released for national reconstruction, and the dream of a resurgent and reorganised national life rises to life.

The various spheres of national life will then become self-generating centres for continuing the tradition set up by the Swayamsevaks. The process of samskars will continue to mould generation after generation and thus serve as the perennial life-spring for national reorganisation and resurgence. Thus the process that the Sangh has set in motion in our national life is eternal state of organised national life - each one of its institutions and traditions consciously and diligently watering the living seeds of national samskars - the Sangh will have no need to retain its separate institutional name and form. The Sangh will then merge in the nation like the Ganga in the ocean and live as the moving national spirit for all time to come.

Efficacy of the Technique

The history of the growth and the beneficial effects of the work of the Sangh over the past four decades has amply borne out the practicability of the vision of its great founder. The technique that he evolved has proved its merit to the hilt. It is now established and accepted even by those who do not belong to the Sangh that this is a technique, which succeeds.

The Potency of the Sacred Dust

Once a big Army officer met me in Punjab. He Asked me, "What is the special training that is given in the Sangh?" I said, "Only playing and singing." He replied, "How can it be? There must be something more than that. Because, personally I know of instances in Punjab during those terrible days of Partition where the Sangh Swayamsevaks excelled even our trained military men in heroism and sacrifice. I also know that many of them have laid down their lives cheerfully while protecting our people. So I

would like to know the special training which could make them such heroes." I explained to him the simple programme of our Shakha and said, "Kabaddi sums up our whole training." Hearing my reply he stared at me with an unbelieving look.

That is the potency of the sacred dust of our Sanghasthan where the children of our great motherland come and play together, sing and pray together for the glory of their divine mother, Bharat Mata. It is the same spirit as the one that made the Duke of Wellington utter that famous sentence - "The Battle of Waterloo was won on the playground of Eton and Harrow."

Successful on All Scores

Several have been the occasions when the spirit of discipline and dedication of the Swayamsevaks was put on trial and the man-moulding process of the Shakha tested. And after every such ordeal the mettle of the Swayamsevaks has shone all the more bright. In 1948, when Government had clamped a ban on the Sangh ignoring all canons of justice, the Sangh was forced to launch a countrywide movement in vindication of justice and fairplay in national life. In spite of the all-out measures of the Government to suppress the movement, its singular success proved the matchless potency of the technique of the Sangh in moulding men fired with a spirit of unbounded sacrifice, heroism and discipline in the national cause.

The other techniques that we see all around us today, no doubt, make a loud noise. But what exactly will there be inside is a point in question. A drum doubtless makes a big noise, but it is all hollow inside! The loud trumpeting and beating of drums by others will not therefore affect the workers of the Sangh in the least. They are aware that Sangh has a method that has proved its efficacy on all scores in realising the dream of a resurgent and reorganised national life.

The Method that Suits

There is the instance of a great personality - great but not famous. As we know, not all great men are famous and not all famous men are great! Once an European gentleman said to him, "What a queer type of dress you Hindus wear! You wear dhoti; and when you have to fight, you will get entangled in it and fall." That great man sharply replied, "Who told you that we are always on the look-out for a fight? We are cultured human beings. We think of the peace of the world. Om shantih, shantih, shantih - that is our motto. We behave and dress accordingly. You have no peace of mind and are always with daggers drawn at each other. And so you dress as though you are on a battlefield all the time. We are fearless, peaceful and therefore dress ourselves accordingly. Only when we are challenged, we put on the warrior dress". What a fitting answer it was!

Similarly is our method eminently suited for the particular goal that we have chosen. Often, the simple rugged appearance of our daily Shakha baffles the keenest of intellects and makes them doubt whether it can take us to such a sublime goal. Suppose a gardener wants to grow mango fruits. Does he place the seed in a pot of honey scented with perfume in order that it may give rise to more delicious fruits? Will he not, on the other hand, plant it in the soil mixed with manure? It is a matter of experience that in the process of imparting samskars of strength a rugged exterior is a 'must'.

Role of Elders

Looking at the external form of our daily programmes in the Shakha there is a misconception, especially among our elderly generation, that all this daily routine of playing, physical exercises, singing, prayer, etc., are meant for the boys and youths and that the role of elders is only of sympathisers, blessing and

supporting the youngsters. That would be totally missing the spirit of our organisation. When we say, this is a work of reorganising society, it implies the present society. And by 'present society' we mean those who are the elders - the grihasthas - in society. Nobody will say that children are the present society. Suppose some naked kids are playing by the roadside in a town. Will anybody who sees them say that the people in that town go about naked always playing on the roadside? Children are after all the generation of tomorrow. So, the responsibility of organising our society lies squarely on the shoulders of the present generation, i.e., the elders. As such, it is they who have to take the lead in actively working for this great mission of national reorganisation.

When this viewpoint is put forth, usually two reasons are advanced by the elders to plead their inability. Firstly, insufficiency of the time at their disposal. But is it not a fact that it is the busy man with capacity for work who can find time to take up extra activity in the public field also? He alone is capable of adjusting his other works and keeping apart some time for it once he feels it his essential duty. It is only an idle man who says that he finds no time. Though this appears a bit paradoxical, nevertheless this is the truth.

Secondly, there is a feeling that being respectable elders, it would not be befitting them to move about and take part in physical programmes with half-pants on just like boys. They feel it below their dignity. But is it a right attitude? If it is a fact that we do possess prestige in society, does it reside in our inherent worth or in the external dress? If we imagine that it is due to our outer dress, then its entire credit must go to a tailor or a washerman! On the other hand, if we have no real worth or prestige at all, then the outer get-up can help very little to make up that inner deficiency!

There is a very important viewpoint which we should bear in mind in this regard. It is said in the Bhagavad Gita ¬-

"Yadyadaacharati shreshtah
Tattadevetaro janah"

(*As the great ones behave, so do the rest of the people.*) When the elders with real worth and prestige in society take to a particular mode of behaviour to suit a noble ideal, the same will become popular and respectable in the eyes of others also. In fact, by that, they will be only adding to their prestige. For instance, when Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Malaviyaji had gone to England to participate in the R.T.C., they were dressed in our own swadeshi style. Their prestige did not suffer on that account. On the other hand people's respect for them increased.

A special responsibility has developed today upon the present elderly generation to protect the young budding generation from the current atmosphere breeding with poisonous germs of dissension and dissipation, so that it may flower into a noble and virile manhood capable of making our nation rise to its heights of greatness and glory. For that purposes they have to set an example in their daily life by becoming the living instruments of the mission of national reorganisation that the Sangh has been successfully pursuing all these years.

The Happy Augury

Once Sister Nivedita, the chosen disciple of Swami Vivekananda, said, "If only Hindus collectively pray daily for ten minutes in the morning and in the evening, they will become an invincible society." The daily Shakha of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh augurs the realisation of the passionate dream of that dedicated soul.

May we all rise in response to the supreme call of action, in the form of Shakha - of steady, silent, perseverant and day-to-day rebuilding of a unified country-wide brotherhood, disciplined and dedicated at the feet of our sacred nation.

Call of the Guru

Sri Guru Poornima, which is also called Vyasa Poornima, is an occasion of great significance and sanctity for us. It was the great sage Vyasa who classified and organised the vast storehouse of knowledge, the Vedas. He highlighted the sublime virtues and values of life evolved in Bharat Varsha over the ages and offered a beautiful synthesis of the thought and practice embedded therein. His work stands as a lighthouse of guidance not only for our countrymen but for the entire humanity. Veda Vyasa, therefore, is rightly called Jagad-Guru, and world preceptor. It is because of this, that Guru Pooja is also known as Vyasa Pooja.

On this day, we offer our worship to our Guru, whoever he may be, and place at his feet our humble offering. We seek his blessings and resolve to march ahead on the path of our life-ideal in the light of his guidance.

So far as our organisational set-up is concerned, we have not looked upon any particular individual as the Guru. Our scriptures have eulogised in glowing terms the qualities of the Guru and placed him on a pedestal equal to God Himself. Naturally, it would be impossible to find such a Guru in the person of any human being. No mortal can ever be expected to be perfect, without any blemish or shortcoming. And, after all, a human being is a fleeting entity. He can't be a permanent guide for a nation from generation to generation.

We, in Sangh, have therefore chosen a symbol, which would at once reflect the highest and the noblest in our national heritage. And that is the sacred Bhagawa Dhwaj.

Yajna Symbolised

Yajna - sacrifice - occupies a pivotal position in our cultural heritage. The term Yajna carries several meanings. Offering one's individual life in the cause of social regeneration is Yajna. To offer as oblation all that is unworth, undesirable and unholy in us in the fire of virtues, too, is Yajna. And to take to a fiery path of dedication, sacrifices, service and penance is the very essence of Yajna. The presiding deity of Yajna is fire. Flame represents the fire and the sacred Bhagawa flag is the symbol of the orange-coloured sacrifice flames.

Flag of Bhagawan

We are the devotees of Shraddha - faith - and not of superstition. We are the devotees of knowledge and not of ignorance. Our seers and sages did severe penance to get rid of ignorance and to attain the light of true and everlasting knowledge. Darkness represents ignorance and the sun represents the light of knowledge. In our ancient literature the sun -Suryanarayana - is described as sitting in a chariot drawn by seven horses. And before he arrives on the sky, the saffron-coloured flag fluttering from his chariot appears on the eastern horizon in shining colours. It is symbolic of the saffron hue of the eastern effulgence at the sunrise, dispelling darkness and heralding the coming of daylight. That flag of Bhagawan Suryanarayana is the flag of Bhagawan - God - Himself. That term later on became Bhagawa Dhwaj.

The highest stage of human development is represented by the fourth and the final ashrama - the sannyasa -, which demands a spirit of total renunciation and service. The sannyasi has to tread unflinchingly on the fiery path of self-sacrifice. And as a constant reminder of his sacrificial life the sannyasi wears the Bhagawa.

The Worship

Thus “Bhagawa" has been the symbol of the highest principles and practices evolved over ages in this sacred land. Now, what is the attitude that we cherish while worshipping such a Guru? Offering flowers, sandal paste, waving lights form only the externals. The true import of worship, however, lies in trying to assimilate in our life the qualities symbolized by the Guru. Thus, to become more and more identified with the Guru himself would be the real worship. There is an old command, which says that he who worships Shiva should become Shiva himself - Shivo Bhutva Shivam Yajet.

The offering that we make on this day of Guru Pooja in the form of money is to remind ourselves that the earnings that we make all our life is made possible because of the co-operation of society around us. Not only the financial earnings but our entire security and happiness is a thing vouchsafed by society. As such it becomes our duty to pay back that social debt, to the maximum extent possible for us. In fact, the daily one-hour Shakha wherein we offer our body, mind and intellect is intended to fulfil that social obligation in our daily life. It is in tune with this spirit of self-offering nurtured in Sangh that the system of Guru Dakshina also has been evolved.

34. Character - Personal and National

In our national tradition character has always occupied the place of foremost importance. Character has two facets: the one, which is personal, and the other, which manifests itself in our relationship with society. Both these aspects of our character should be pure and unsullied. But these days we often hear people saying that if a man is working well in the public field, why should we look at his personal conduct? Maybe he is addicted to a number of vices, but when he is doing good to the people why should we pry into his private life?

Our Concept

However, our culture has always held high the purity of personal character. We have never called a person a philosopher who is selfish or given to various vices like wine, woman and gold. For us, the philosopher is, more than everything else, a man of absolute purity and austerity of character. Right from the ancient seers down to the great personalities of modern times, all those whom we consider as standard-bearers of our philosophy and culture have been wholly pure - their thought, word and deed all in tune with the highest truths. Such men alone have been the real glowing symbols of our national heritage. But such is not the example set up by workers in the public field these days. There is a general feeling that if a person is generous in giving donations or he delivers fine speeches or has gone to jail a number of times for a public cause then his private conduct, howsoever abhorrent, may be condoned.

The idea of 'greatness' prevalent in the outside world is also similar. There are ever so many men who are eulogised as nation-

builders and national heroes who, however, were degenerate in their personal character.

The "means" is like the vessel - if it is dirty and contaminated, then, the water that we drink from it will carry infection into our body. It is necessary, therefore, that the vessel too is as clean as the water.

Purity of ‘Means’

However, our culture says the 'means' - the individual - for achieving the 'ideal - the social good - must also be chaste and holy. Many times we hear people saying that the end justifies the means. Most of the modern ideas and ideologies, which seem to be catching the imagination of the people today, belong to this category. It means that the individual - the 'means' for bringing about any social change - is relegated to the background. Therefore we see the degeneration of man going on at a terrific pace all over the world, having thrown to winds all considerations of the human element in pursuit of an end ordained mostly by politicians. But, the command of our culture is different. We revere Rama and Shivaji as much for their glorious national achievements as for their pure, unimpeachable personal character. The view that some little failing in personal character needs to be ignored or even justified, provided he works all right in the public field, is against our grain.

It is, however, true that when choice became inevitable between two evils, we have tolerated - but not justified - some failings in personal character when it did not come in the way of social interest.

Bad means can never yield good results in the long run. If for some time bad means appears to give good results, it is only temporary. It is like trying to warm ourselves by sitting amidst

fire when caught in a hailstorm. The warmth will soon result in our total reduction to ashes. We are no doubt aware of how electioneering is carried on by various persons and parties in our country today. There is an instance of the 1937 elections. I asked a certain Congress candidate why he was stooping to low tactics. He replied, "Well, evil has to be met with evil". I asked him, "Can you make coal-tar white by adding charcoal?" and added, "If this logic is pursued, a time will come when there will not be a single individual who will choose to be good and honest. Even supposing we are to suffer for some time, should we not fight our way through all those evils?" Today, things have come to such a pass that it is only those who have mastered more and more of those evil tactics who rise higher in power and positions. As such the importance of the character of the individual - the purity of the means - can never be over-emphasised.

A Potential Danger

If a person is loose in character and given to vices, he can be a source of danger to the nation as well. Our nation is surrounded by various other nations and it is a matter of history that no two nations are either permanently friendly or permanently hostile to each other. The relationships go on changing. Each country is guided by its own self-interest and does not hesitate to stoop to any tactics to achieve its ends. So they are all in a way 'potential enemies' to our country. It is all right that, while speaking and moving among others, we cherish sentiments of friendship, world peace and world fraternity and even strive for them. But the statesman, who guide the destinies of the country, must always keep in view this hard reality of the world which can be ignored only at our peril.

These 'potential' enemies or even the open enemies who surround our nation will certainly try to exploit our weaknesses to their advantage. There is the well-known incident of the First World

War. At one stage it was found that Germans used to get the clue to the plans which the commanders of the 'Allies' used to discuss and decide upon. Before they were put into action, the enemy forestalled them and made a mockery of all their plans. For a long time it went on like this. Only when special officers were deputed to trace the leakage was it discovered that in the camp of the important generals there was a woman spy, Mata Hari by name. To those lustful persons she appeared charming. She was also well-versed in singing, dancing and all such enticing arts. She allured those generals and wormed herself in their hearts. She stayed with them in their tents. They had such implicit faith in her that they freely discussed their plans in her presence. But she, on her part, was regularly giving out those plans to the other side. It was only after she was traced and caught that victory could be achieved. If those generals had been persons of upright character and considered the whole of womanhood as manifestation of the Divine Mother, as every Hindu is expected to consider, they could have avoided so much of disservice and disaster to their countries.

Story with a Moral

Some have weakness for flattery. If anyone showers praise upon them, they become elated and inflated and will be prepared to do anything that is desired of them. One can resist many things but not flattery. It is easier to digest the deadliest of poisons than to digest praise and honour. As the story goes, Bhagawan Shankara drank the deadly poison for the protection of all creation but remained unaffected. However even he fell a prey to the praises of Bhasmasura and invited troubles to himself! Praise puffs up a man like an inflated football, always being kicked about from one side to the other. Anybody may come, just praise him in superlatives, get his own self-interest fulfilled and go away leaving the man disillusioned or probably not!

There is an old story carrying this moral. Once a crow with a piece of meat in its beak was sitting on a tree. Seeing the crow, a fox sat down under the tree and looking up at the crow, began praising, "What a charming colour you have, sister! It is the same Shyama varna as lord Krishna. And the last time I heard you sing, oh, even the Gandharvas would have envied you! How fortunate I would be to get another chance of listening to your divine music!" The crow began to rock to and fro in great elation and thought, "All right, let me oblige this fellow". And as it opened its beak the piece of meat fell down. The fox snatched it readily and went its way saying, "I have no love for your music any more!"

Weakness for flattery is there in many of our great personalities today. And there are many cunning men in the world, who make use of this subtle instrument of praise. When thy say, "What a peace-loving, non-violent and generous man you are! You are one of the greatest international figures in the world" and so on, our leaders are swept off their feet and they grant whatever is asked for, whether it be canal-water, money, material or our army men as cannon-fodder in conflicts all over the world.

Alert at Every Step

If therefore we are to be of service to the nation under all circumstances, we have to set our face sternly against these failings and develop a pure personal character. Especially when a worker in the public field moves about among the people the public eye becomes rivetted upon him. Even if he slips a bit, it is marked out and the people will ejaculate, "Oh! What a fall!" they nevertheless overlook far more serious lapses on the part of other common men. When we wear a coloured shirt it makes very little difference in appearance whether we wear if for a day or for a fortnight. But, on a clean white cloth even a drop of water leaves its mark for a time. So the purer we aspire to become, the more the vigilance we have to exercise over every moment of our life.

We have to be alert at every step as though the whole of society is keenly eyeing us only to peck at and expose our failings.

Enough of 'Gentlemanliness'

Then we come to the national aspect.

We see around us a number of persons with good personal character. Maybe they have remained good and harmless merely because they have had no chance or daring to take to evil ways! It is no use having such negative, inactive, so-called goodness and gentlemanliness. Doctorji used to say humorously of such persons, "See, what a thorough gentleman Sriman is! He goes to the office punctually, returns home in the evening, chats with his wife and children, eats and sleeps. He has never once tried to interfere in others matters. Although he has been residing here for over twenty-five years, he does not even know how his neighbours are nor do they know much about him. Rarely do we come across such a good, harmless, unassuming gentleman!" Doctorji would then chastise the 'gentlemanliness' that made the individual impervious to the joys and sorrows of his neighbours, and submit meekly to the insults and humiliations heaped on his society. It was this cursed mentality, he used to say, that lay at the root of all our national ills.

Even in the past there had been quite a number of pious and well-meaning persons in our land. In spite of that, we have had to face disasters continuously over the last thousand years. Some have even gone to the length of asserting that it was this too much of personal goodness that landed our nation in troubles. But it is not a correct reading of history. The real reason was that we lacked in national character - the essential counterpart of personal character. We are not mere solitary individuals but are indivisible parts of the whole society. In that relationship also we should express and uphold purity of character. If this aspect is ignored, mere piety

and goodness of the individual will be of little avail in the cause of the nation. Not merely that; if society does not survive, the individual goodness and character also will be trampled under the feet of barbaric aggressors. And that is what has happened in the past.

Lurid Examples

To give a glaring example: the Raja Karna of Gujarat had a Prime Minister who was a great scholar of Vedas and also well-versed in various arts and sciences. Once the King, in a moment of weakness, abducted the wife of one of his sardars. At this the Prime Minister was beside himself with rage and took a vow to punish the King for that sin. He felt that all his powers of piety and religious learning were challenged. What was the course he adopted to fulfil his vow? He knew that the Muslim armies were poised on the northern border of Gujarat. Prior to that, they had made several abortive attempts to over-run and subjugate Gujarat. The Prime Minister directly went to the Muslim Sultan at Delhi and sought his help to punish his King for the sin he had committed. The enemy was only too glad to snatch that golden opportunity. Equipped with the valuable information revealed by the Prime Minister, who knew all the secrets of the defences of his kingdom, the enemy marched on Gujarat. And the powerful Hindu outpost of Karnavati, which had so far effectively checked the Muslim expansion into the South, fell. Thereafter, not only Gujarat, but, the whole of South lay prostrate at the feet of Muslim marauders. What did Prime Minister gain after all? Doubtless, the King was killed, but along with him thousands of the Prime Minister's own kith and kin were put to sword. Countless women were molested before his eyes, temples razed to the ground and his own residence where he used to recite Vedas and worship God turned into a slaughter-house of cows; in addition, a vast portion of our motherland was reduced to slavery for centuries to come!

We can see, that, on the one hand, the King was loose in his personal character, but, strong in the national aspect, and, on the other hand, the Prime Minister was personally full of piety, of God-fearing nature and all that, but devoid of national character which enables a man to judge the ultimate well-being of the nation as a whole and urges him to sacrifice his all including his personal notions of righteousness at the altar of his nation's well-being. Thus both the King and Prime Minister became responsible for bringing about such a great disaster to a cause which both of them cherished.

In fact, the perverted notion of personal character and dharma exhibited by that Prime Minister is not a solitary instance in our history. It was sufficiently deep-rooted to produce a whole race of traitors down the centuries. It was the 'devout' worshippers of Ishwara who guided and aided the Mohammed of Ghazni, who had, set out with the declared objective of desecrating Somnath. Jayasingh, the famous sardar of Aurangzeb, who came to destroy Shivaji, too, was a man of learning, an ardent worshipper of God and endowed with many a remarkable quality of head and heart. But in vain did Shivaji appeal to him in the name of swadesh and swadharma and call upon him to lead the patriotic forces against the cruel foreigner instead of remaining his slave. But Jayasingh was quite contented with his 'devotion to God' along with his oath of 'loyalty to Emperor'. What a dangerous perversion of the concept of devotion to God and of one's sense of personal integrity and loyalty! It is clear that only when the twin aspects of character are manifest that both the individual and the society can progress and prosper. They are like the two faces of a coin - one having the imprint of national insignia and the other carrying its value. Erasure of any one face will render it useless.

The National Aspect

It is essential, therefore, that personal goodness and purity of character be made active and dynamic in the national cause. It must express itself in the form of complete dedication to the nation which does not expect anything in return, be it name or fame or any gain whatsoever. We should not worry whether the people whom we serve praise us or not. In fact, it would be better for us if they do not. Because we are then free from the bondage of public praise which may tie us down to an undesirable course. We look upon our nation as our Chosen Deity. Our dedication, our offering of all that we have, should be made in a spirit of worshipping the Nation-God. Then how can we ask for anything in return?

Today, this spirit of unreserved sacrifice and dedication has all but disappeared. If persons go to serve in the public field they want something in return; if not money, a name, a jaikar or at least a photograph in some paper. Once an eminent leader of our country, always accustomed to receiving big ovations, went to a place. He was shocked to see no one present there to receive him. There were no slogans, no garlands and no photographs. He felt insulted and actually went back at once! This is a polished way of selfish behaviour. Other practical and paying ways are also being practised. If in the name of the nation a person serves himself, then it is not rashtra-bhakti but swartha-bhakti. For such a person service of the people is only a mask to further his own personal glory.

These days even worship of God is carried on by many in the same fashion. They pray putran dehi dhanam dehi¬ - 'Oh, God! Give me sons, give me wealth' - and so on. If there is a demand for something, then it is not worship, it is carrying on mere business. All our scriptures and holy men have derided this ignoble attitude. Worship is for the sake of worship, for the very joy of it. If at all we pray for anything, it is for greater capacity

and greater worthiness to worship, greater strength to pursue the path of service and sacrifice.

There is an instance of Yudhishthira in Mahahbahrata. When the Pandavas along with Draupadi were roaming about in the forests, Draupadi observed Yudhishthira constantly repeating the name of God. Being keenly aware of their woeful conditions she asked bitterly, "Why do you always take the name of God? Even from your childhood you have been devoted to Him. You have performed so many yajnas and all the duties enjoined by the shastras. But till now, how has God responded to you? You have been even deprived of your rightful throne and are now made to wander about from place to place, always under the shadow of danger. Are you not tired of repeating His name even now?" Yudhishthira gently replied. "Look at those Himalayas! How peaceful and majestic! Do we not love it! Is it because we expect anything from it? We love it because of its solemn grandeur, its serenity and purity. So is God, but infinitely more grand. In the presence of such sublime grandeur I have nothing to ask, except to enjoy its bliss and love it all the more". In the Narada Bhakti Sutra, God is described as the very embodiment of love - Sa Paramapremaroopa.

Power of Devotion

Devotion is not business. It is sheer self-surrender. It is all one-way traffic; we only give. It is only persons of such absolute dedication who can raise the nation to glorious heights from amidst a heap of ruins.

The inspiring example of Khando Ballal is before us. After Sambhaji ascended the throne he, because of some past prejudices, put to death Khando Ballal's father who was one of the Ashta Pradhans of Shivaji. Khando Ballal was at that time a proud, heroic young man. But he silently gulped down that agony

and insult. And again when Sambhaji, who was addicted to women and wine, cast his evil eyes on his sister, Khando Ballal allowed her to end her life to save her chastity, but he himself never forsook his loyalty to Sambhaji. For he knew that Sambhaji, with all his personal vices, was then the unifying symbol of the resurgent Hindu Swaraj around which all Hindu forces were trying to rally. Later, when Sambhaji was captured by Aurangzeb, it was Khando Ballal who risked his life in a hazardous attempt to free him. True to his spirit of dedication to a cause, Rajaram became his point of loyalty after the end of Sambhaji. Once again we see him casting the life of his own son in mortal peril and giving away all his property in a successful bid to free Rajaram, who lay besieged in Jinji fort. Ultimately he sacrificed his life as the final offering in the cause of swaraj. What a glorious and unreserved self-immolation!

It is as a result of such sacrifices, not merely of one's life but all that one holds near and dear including one's ego, that the entire course of history changes. Aurangzeb who had come down to the South with an army of nearly five lakhs after Shivaji's passing away to put out the smouldering embers of the spirit of swaraj, was himself enveloped in the flames that blazed forth form the sacrificial pyres of such heroic souls as Khando Ballal and had to enter his grave in South itself.

When Character Blooms

Such is real national character. Let us develop it in our lives by constant endeavour. With our hearts overflowing with pure love for the whole of society, with no trace of selfishness or expectation for our self, let us serve the nation. And may the lotus of our character blossom in the bright rays of pure sacred national devotion.

Let us aspire and strive for such an unwavering and unreserved spirit of devotion-a devotion, which rises above the ordinary plane of intellect and ego and enters into the very marrows of our being. Let that deep, serene and perennial flow of pure devotion permeate the whole of our being. All great lives beckon us to this one direction- the direction of single-minded dedication. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was a scholar of unchallenged eminence. He had defeated all his great contemporaries in discussions on all the varied spiritual subjects. But with all that brilliance of intellect and vastness of learning, he later on gave up all discussions and arguments, and to those who came to discuss he would only say in words soaked with devotion - Hari bol, Hari bol. The thrill of devotion in those words would carry away the listener in its current and make him realise the vanity of dry discussions and the grandeur of devotion.

Such a person of intense devotion develops extraordinary powers for achieving his goal. Even in our daily life do we not see that an ordinary workman works best when he loves and adores his work and an artist is at his best when he forgets himself in drawing the picture after his heart? Let us try to develop such a state of perfect concentration on the path of national devotion and make our lives living examples of sterling character in all its aspects

35. Be Men with Capital 'M'

Once, while I was conversing with a great Sadhu, the subject of frequent student strikes came up. The Sadhu remarked, "This is the bitter fruit of dinning into the ears of students by our leaders that they are the pillars of the nation, the leaders of tomorrow and so on. This, coupled with their natural immaturity, has made them swollen-headed. The right attitude to be inculcated in the young minds is of selfless service, where ego has no chance to raise its ugly head. Calling them 'pillars', 'future leaders' and all that has only roused their ego which makes them rise in revolt and indulge in strikes and violence at the slightest touch of injustice or insult, imaginary or otherwise."

Listening to those wise words of the Sadhu, I remembered an incident in the life of Sri Ramakrishna. Once some of his disciples were talking about helping the poor, showing compassion to them and so on. Sri Ramakrishna came there in a God-intoxicated mood and admonished them saying, "Who are you to show compassion to them? Who are you to help them? They are the living manifestations of Narayana himself. So you can only serve them".

Be a Foundation - Stone

This attitude will generate in us the spirit of true selfless service and take us a long way in giving purity, humility and strength to our character and save us from swollen-headedness, which is the first step to degeneration. Let the stone in the foundation be our ideal. It lies there unseen, unadmired. It may not be beautiful, may not be polished; but all the same it is the base. If it moves or is shaken, the whole edifice crumbles down. More important than the central dome, more important than anything else, is that stone in the foundation. However, the stone remains there as a symbol

of self-oblivious service and self-effacement. That should be the spirit with which we have to work among the people. The desire to strut about in the limelight of name and fame, to shine at the top only betrays one's lack of inner worth and weakness for self-adulation. After all, what is great about sitting at the top? Even a crow can sit at the top of a dome!

True Service

The great men of our land have always upheld the spirit of service as the highest expression of devotion to God. One such great soul has prayed to Almighty-

"Natvaham kaamaye rajyam
Na swargam naapurnarbhavam
Kaamaye duhkhataptaanaam
Praninaamaartinaashanam"

(*I desire neither kingdom nor heaven nor salvation. All that I desire is to remove the sorrows and miseries of living beings.*) This is the true spirit of service. The constant prayer of such a person is for greater strength and capacity to serve. His fulfillment in life is that he has offered in service all that God has bestowed upon him. He says, "Oh, God! I have emptied the jholi (bag) of my life at Thy feet, and therein lies the fullness of my life".

Swami Vivekananda used to say, "Be ready to bear everything for the sake of the people like the great Guru Govind Singh. After having shed his blood and the blood of his nearest and dearest, he retired from the field calmly to die in the South but not a word of curse escaped his lips against those who had ungratefully forsaken him!"

Such is the true servant of society who seeks not anything in return for himself but finds the joy of fulfillment in having suffered and sacrificed for the good of society.

Even while wiping the tears of sorrow of others, the feelings of elation or self-gratification does not enter such minds. Such perversions enter when there is no real identification with the sufferings of others.

There was an annual function of a 'Home for Destitute Widows' in Bombay. The secretary while reporting the progress of the institution expressed his gratification that every year larger number of widows were filling that 'home'. He ended with the hope that the institution would grow on like that for ever! If he had been really distressed at the woeful condition of those women, evidently he would not have prayed for there 'growing number"! The feeling of a worker with the true sprit of service will be like those of a son while serving his ailing mother. We are all children of our society and whatever service we do should be imbued with that pure and sublime spirit.

Symbols of Self-reliance

The spirit of humility and service need not make us loose our self-reliance and self-confidence. All our great men have been an embodiment of the blend of the two virtues. In fact, the two qualities are like the two faces of a coin.

Mahadev Govind Ranade, a scholar of great note in Maharashtra was a destitute in his early life. In his school days he would go to Madhukari (receiving food from a few homes) which was then considered honourable. He would sit in temples under an oil lamp and study. Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar, one of our greatest educationists from Bengal, was also very poor. It was monetarily

hard enough for him even to complete Matriculation. Then he took up a job and out of his meagre earnings continued his college studies. Self-reliance was the watchword that made these stalwarts rise to such heights of scholarship.

Then we have the inspiring example of Swami Ramatirtha. He was born in an extremely poor family. He was married early as was the custom in those days. After his completing Matriculation his father wanted him to take a job and maintain the family. But he had resolved to continue his studies. A conflict ensued and his father asked him to quit the house. Ramatirtha made obeisance to his father, asked his wife to follow and quit the house. He was aged about fifteen years and his wife about eight years at that time. She also braved the storm, having devoutly listened in her childhood to the stories of Sita and Draupadi and how they had followed their husbands to the forests. Ramatirtha rented a small room and lodged his wife there. He became a part-time tutor in a school and joined the college. Further, he was a student bound by all the injunctions enjoined on a brahmachari. He could not take food prepared by any woman other than his mother. So he cooked food for himself and his wife. He began teaching her also. In spite of all these privations, he was always coming out in flying colours in all his examinations. He took Sanskrit for B.A.. Till then he had not the slightest touch of Sanskrit. But he had steeled his will to pass and he came out in first class. Such are the towering personalities who rose to sublime heights of achievement on the strength of their will and determination, which carried them through all obstacles and adversities.

Truly has it been said, "Self-help is the best help". Once a villager was driving his bullock cart to a neighbouring village. On the way the wheels got stuck in the mud. The man sat cursing his fate and praying to God to get him out of the troubles. After some time, a person passing that way saw him sitting with folded hands bewailing his lot. He asked the villager to get up and put his

shoulders to the wheel along with him. The cart came out of the mud in no time; then he went his way telling the villager, "God helps those who help themselves."

Curse of ‘Careerism’

But what do we see all around us today? Do we find such self-effort and self-reliance in our youth? Take a student, for instance. He does not like to take the trouble of writing notes every day at home. The study of textbooks also has become out of date. He goes in for printed notes, questions and answers and tries to get them by rote. And if he can dispense with that also, so much the better. For that purpose, he moves about to see if he can get at the examination questions beforehand and sometimes does not hesitate even to copy from others in the examination hall. Or else, he takes some rounds of the Hanuman shrine! But he never pauses to think that he has to put in personal efforts to learn, to acquire knowledge. Naturally, he remains the same dunce that he was even after passing the examination.

Our educated young men hanker after easy jobs and easier money. They are after cheap careers, which are the very antithesis of self-respect and self-reliance. The same low mentality is the reason for hankering after Government jobs. Guaranteed regular monthly income, little exertion, very little responsibility, and pension after retirement - well, this line of least resistance appeals to many. They hanker after this simplest of short-cuts to ease and comfort. How despicable is this idle 'career' for filling one's belly!

Sometimes even good and well-meaning persons get into that track and then bitterly complain of their helplessness to act up to their convictions in life on account of having become Government employees. It is like a person putting his neck into the noose and then crying out that he is losing his life! To sell one's soul by becoming 'your most obedient servant' as a short-cut to easy

money is in fact a short-cut to animality. There is joy in living by the sweat of one's brow even as a 'hamal'. I know of an M.Com. who pulls a rickshaw. He prefers that life of hard work and independence to one of idleness and servility. He gets quite a handsome income too. One should bow down to such a life of self-respect and self-reliance.

Let us not become 'careerists' hankering after easy money, less effort and more comfort. Such unmanliness ill behoves the educated young men of a land, which has produced a Ramatirtha and a Vidyasagar. Let us build our life on those inspiring models blending the spirit of service with self-respect and humility with self-confidence. All our latent virtues and energies will then blossom into a beautiful and fragrant flower of heroic manhood.

Tall Talking, Low Living

Now, how are we to manifest this spirit of selfless service and other virtues in our actual life? What is that inspiring object to which we are to offer our worship and service? Is it 'humanity'? We often hear persons speaking of 'world brotherhood', 'service to humanity' and all that. But when such people come to grips with reality, all those dreams vanish into thin air. I know of a gentleman, who used to repeat the highest Advaitic saying Sarvam khalvidam Brahma (verily God pervades all creation) but who would draw back with revulsion at the sight of a Negro! Our educated young men cannot even bear the atmosphere of our own villages, what to speak of humanity! Now there is a cry, "Go back to villages". But who listens to that? When they see the stark naked humanity in the villages, all their tall talk gets frozen. Once a young man went to take 'up the work of village upliftment. He was accustomed to gingelly oil but the people there were habituated to linseed oil. He could not simply bear the smell of that oil. It appeared as if that horrible smell pervaded the whole

atmosphere! He could not eat, he could not sleep. He could not stay there even for a day and he hastened back.

Unless we are properly trained so as to meet the challenges we cannot stand the test of harsh reality. Once I came across a young man who wanted to learn wrestling. But when he was asked to take off his clothes, he exclaimed, "Taking off the clothes and wrestling! No! No! If there is anything like wrestling with all my clothes on, then only I can". So I asked him to wrestle with mosquitoes! This is what happens to those who speak of high ideals like serving humanity. When they come face to face with its severe demands they turn back and invariably end in inactivity.

The Golden Mean

The other extreme swing of the pendulum to which people go is the mentality of "I and my family, that is all." Once a leading advocate of a place asked me, "If I cannot think of humanity why should I not think of only my family?" I replied, "Our national prosperity and happiness were razed to dust when we thought of Brahma satyam jaganmithya only on a superficial plane. Similar fate overtook us when we were immersed only in our narrow personal and family life. So, both these extremes - ativyapti and avyapti - must be avoided and a middle path adopted. We get that balance, that perfect poise of mind, when we take up the golden mean between the two extremes, in the form of 'nation'.

Reactionary ‘Progressives’

Hence, the one idea, which can inspire us all to dedicate ourselves, is 'service to our nation'. That will satisfy both the aspects of a practical ideal - the sense of realism and the sense of idealism.

It is well known that the spirit of service will be generated only towards the object of our love, pride and adoration. The first and foremost training that we must impart to our minds is, therefore, the inculcation of feelings of intense love, pride and adoration for our national life in its manifold aspects - its religion, history, heritage, philosophy of life, aspirations, points of faith and honour.

But there are people calling themselves 'progressives' in our country today for whom all our ancient life-values appear as reactionary and harmful. Their chief argument against our values of life is its age. These neo-prophets have neo-mania. For them all that is old is bad. Since their nostrums are chronologically later arrivals, they assume them to be more efficacious. It is like a doctor advising the patient to die since chronologically death follows life! Must we substitute tube-light for the sun because the sun is old, indeed very old, and tube-light a recent device to dispel darkness?

To condemn things as useless and retrograde simply because they are old would amount to accepting the worst type of slavery - the slavery of the intellect. And yet these intellectual slaves are pleased to appoint themselves as the 'progressives' of this age. This is a sign of weakness of the mind, the absence of intellectual strength to think freely and positively, fully and fearlessly.

Mental Slavery

The second factor, which has added to this weakness of mind, is the sense of inferiority complex that we suffer in relation to the Westerners. This is an evil legacy of the days of English rule here. During the last one century or more many personalities have arisen in this land, who have striven to shake off the foreign yoke. But most of them had themselves become mental salves to the English. A sense of defeatism, a sense of inferiority complex

ruled their minds. How did this happen? The reason is simple and lies in the common human weakness of associating good qualities with wealth and power. A famous saying in Sanskrit -

"Yasyaasti vittam sa narah kuleenah
Sa panditah sa shrutimaan gunajnah"

describes how the human mind naturally attributes all virtues, learning, wisdom and great lineage to the possessor of riches and power. When the tide of war turned in favour of the English and for a time it seemed as though we were finally overthrown, there came a period of lull and diffidence, resulting in the fostering of the idea that the victors, superior in their military prowess and scheming skill and possessed of a brave show of physical prosperity, must also needs be superior in all kinds of knowledge. That is why our people at the beginning of the British rule started aping the manners and customs of the English and voicing opinions borrowed from the West with an air of conviction. Every European ideal, however absurd, was gospel truth; everything ours, by contrast, was naturally false and foolish. Especially those learned in the Western lore, the 'educated' class, became in truth 'black-skinned Englishman'.

No wonder that such 'educated' men found no difficulty in gulping down the extraordinary absurdity cleverly propagated by the foreigner that at the root of our defeat and degeneration lay our way of life. So they began to rebuild our national life with contempt for our own culture and infatuation for the foreign ideals. The Britisher too cleverly managed to bring up such soft-pedalling leadership in the country. Foreign rulers have always followed that policy of playing down the genuine elements of patriotism and bringing up a compromising group in order to tone down the fury of freedom struggle in enslaved countries.

Animality Supplants Divinity

This attitude of base imitation had a disastrous effect on our national life. It changed our very life attitudes. As we know, imitation implies a complete absence of one's inherent genius and originality in one's outlook of life. Firstly, it resulted in our forsaking the noble ideals of self-sacrifice and self-restraint in a mad rush to embrace the Western life-pattern of enjoyment and satiation of pleasures of the flesh. Western life is, after all, extrovert. Earthly enjoyment is its highest ideal. Their concept of individual freedom lies in allowing the senses full licence to have an unbridled sway over the mind, thereby making a slave of oneself to the brute instinct. We also, in our wild-goose chase of the white man's ideals, echoed his slogan of 'raising the standard of life', which simply means increasing our slavery to material things in life or, in other words, increasing slavery of man to the brute. It is this glorification of animality that has resulted in all-round selfishness and jealousy. The youth of today is getting infatuated with but one dream in life - of maximum pleasures and enjoyment.

Procrustean Bed of Politics

Secondly, having lost the cultural essence of our national existence, we fell a prey to the superficial view of looking upon politics, as the pivot of life. In line with this perverted view, our people were advised to become 'politically conscious'. This has gone to the extent of even saying that all our life-values must be recast in the light of the requirements of politics! In fact, life was equated with politics and accordingly our dharma, our language and even our history were altered to suit the fleeting shims of political exigencies. After all, politics is described as -

“Vaaraanganeva nrupaneetiranekarupa”

-changing its hue and shade every now and then. It is only an

arrangement, a means to serve social life. But external arrangement is not all, is not life. However, in our case the 'means' was mistaken for the 'end'. Man wears clothes according to the needs of the body. He does not cut up his body according to size of the clothes!

There is a story of a robber by name Procrustes who used to invite an unwary guest to his forest-house and ask him to rest on a cot. If the guest was longer than the cot, the robber used to chop off his extra length, and if shorter, he was elongated forcibly! That was the novel technique the robber employed to murder persons. Similarly are our leaders hammering and straining the body of our nation to adjust it to the bed of politics with the inevitable result that our age-old social life has fallen into a perilous plight.

It is well known that each family has its own deity. Some worship Rama, some Bhavani and some others Shankara as their Chosen Deity. If in the place some evil spirit or a fallen soul is installed nothing short of total perdition awaits such a family. This is what we are witnessing today in our country. Our Chosen Deity of ancient spiritual and cultural heritage is now dethroned form our hearts and in its place the Western spirit of materialism and politics installed.

‘Swa’ in Swatantrya

Today we find everywhere attempts to recast our life-pattern in the mould of an American, English or Russian way of life. How can we call it swatantrata (freedom) which has no swa (our genius) in it? Then it is only para-tantrata. If Lenin is kept as the ideal, it becomes 'Lenin-tantra' and not swa-tantra! In fact, protection and propagation of our national life-values, i.e., our dharma and samskriti, have always been held in our historical tradition as the raison d'etre of swatantrata.

A wheel, in order to rotate, must have its pivot inside. If that pivot is outside the wheel, it cannot rotate. A circle with the centre outside cannot exist. Similarly if the life-centre of Bharatiya life is kept outside Bharat, it cannot survive. If anybody cherishes extra-territorial loyalties, we call him a traitor. Would it not then be a greater disloyalty to our country if a person derives inspiration from extra-territorial ideals?

Some people ask us, "What is your 'ism'? It is clear from the question that the questioners are slaves of the European way of thinking and that they have straitjacketed themselves in European 'isms'. They cannot even conceive that we too have a thought-pattern, a solid substratum of our own on which we can build an ideal national life.

We have to shake ourselves free from these shackles of inferiority complex and imitation. It does not mean that we should not take what is good in other countries. But we should assimilate those things and make them the flesh and blood of our own body. But now we are taking all those foreign things at the cost of our own vitality. Our fate will be like that of a person who is unable to digest the food thrust into his belly, and is sinking under its load.

This mental subservience to the foreigner will ruin all our natural virtues and make us a laughing-stock in the eyes of the world. There is that notorious incident of one of our ambassadors, who, while talking to the Pope, said that the world would no more be poorer even if all the copies of Bhagvad-Gita were consigned to the fire, so long as a single copy of the Sermon on the Mount remained with mankind! Another ambassador, another chip of the same 'progressive' block, selected a cheap cinema love song to be presented as one of our national songs to the country to which he was accredited! Fortunately for our country, the patriotic instinct of one of his subordinate staff averted the national humiliation.

Body without a Soul

A gentleman from the West once remarked, "When I came to Delhi I felt that I was not in India at all. It is just a cheap imitation of London or New York. If this continues, I feel your country has no future. It can only be a satellite, a slave of some other country." How strange, an Englishman comes to us, we talk in English; we go to London and there also we talk in English! And we pride ourselves on being 'internationalists'. This is nothing but utter lack of national self-respect, abject slavery of the mind. When Srimati Vijayalakshmi Pandit was sent as Ambassador to Russia she presented her credentials in English but it was rejected as it was not in our national language. Then the Hindi copy was presented. It was again sent back as there was mistake in the Hindi rendering. What a disgrace!

There are some eminent personalities in our country, who write and speak highly of our culture and philosophy and proclaim that we can lead the world on that basis. But ironically enough it is they who clamour for the retention of English and for the adoption of all foreign systems and customs.

In the days of our fighting against the British, foreign clothes were burnt and foreign goods boycotted. But today, after the British have left, we have not only retained their language, dress, etc., but we are using many times more of foreign goods than we did ten years ago! One can understand the sheer necessity of importing certain essential commodities not manufactured here, like certain military equipment for our armies, and medicines. But what is this nonsense of wasting crores of rupees on playing-cards, lipstick and such other worthless articles? The costly game of cricket, which has not only become a fashion with us but something over which we are spending crores of rupees, only proves that the English are still dominating our mind and intellect. The cricket match that Pandit Nehru and other M.P.s played some

years back was the very depth of this Anglicism. Why could they not play Kabaddi, our national game, which has been acclaimed by several countries as a great game?

How strange that we have picked up only the vulgar exterior of the Western civilization and ignored the spirit of national pride and patriotism that animates every one of their activities, whether in affluence or in adversity. A few decades back, in spite of all-round plenty and prosperity, England was faced with an economic crisis. The leaders of England put their heads together to face the challenge. For that purpose they decided to revive the spirit of swadeshi. They arranged exhibition and geared up their propaganda machinery. And the King himself was in the forefront of that movement. That King and other leaders of society set an example by themselves scrupulously taking to Swadeshi goods. And thus they were able to ward off the economic disaster that was looming large over their nation. We, in our infatuation for the show and pomp of Western life, have sacrificed the spirit of swadeshi and are inviting decay and disaster in every field of our national life.

This corrosion of our national soul has not spared even the most hallowed aspects of our life. For us marriage is a dharmic ceremony. But even there during the sacramental rituals, and not only at the time of reception, the bridegroom is often dressed as an Englishman from top to toe. One is shocked to see aping of a foreigner even in a religious ceremony! The same dismal humiliating picture stares us in the face wherever we go. There can be no future for a nation, which does violence to itself losing faith in its own way of life.

Our forefathers were great, commanding the respect of the world, because they were conscious of their great national ideals and their national self-respect. They would address the world in a tone of quiet confidence born out of the consciousness of their intrinsic

greatness. The very term Arya, which they applied to themselves conveyed culture and character. They had proudly declared:

“Na tvevaaryasya daasyabhaavah”

(*The Arya shall never be a slave.*) They announced:

“Etaddesjaprasootasya
sakaashadagrajanmanah
Swam swam charitram shiksheran
Pruthivyaam sarvamaanavaah”

(*Let men all over the world, learn their lessons in life sitting at the feet of the first-born of this land.*)

Such an intense love and pride in our own national life and ideals alone can protect the true and glowing image of our country before the world today. This flame of pure patriotism needs to be lit in the heart of every son of this soil. And the warmth and effulgence of such hearts shall dispel the darkness of intellectual imbecility enveloping our country.

Let us, with this firm realisation, press forward on the path of national rejuvenation. Let us not be carried away by the clever and often mischievous arguments that corrode the people's faith and devotion to nation. Once a leading figure of our country wrote in an article that the RSS people were 'fanatically patriotic'! We do not know what made him say like that. But so far as we are concerned, we feel that there are no gradations in desha-bhakti, i.e., patriotism. Bhakti is self-surrender, it is dedicating oneself completely and unreservedly without any thought of the self. Real devotion can never be half-way. But it seems some people cannot bear this full-blooded spirit of patriotism. It may be too hot for them. Probably they require gradations in patriotism - warm, lukewarm, and cold! Those who dare to drink to the full the cup

of devotion need not be afraid or misled by such words as 'fanatical'. Let us challengingly say, "Yes, we are building that intense white heat of patriotism”.

Springs of National Glory

In fact, such have been the qualities of the great builders of our society since hoary times. It is always the selfless, self-confident and devoted band of missionaries, intensely proud of their national ethos, who have roused the sleeping manliness in our nation in times of adversity and made our nation rise gloriously from a heap of shambles. Verily such men have been the true salt of this soil. In ancient times, the educated and intelligent young men came forward in an unbroken succession to serve and elevate society giving up all thought of personal comforts and enjoyments. They were the embodiment of the spirit of selfless service, sacrifice and character. They would live on roots or collect a morsel going from door to door and somehow carry on their physical existence. And all their energies were bent towards the single purpose of bringing about the welfare of the common people. They would mix with them, share their joys and sorrows, try to alleviate their physical wants and miseries and infuse in them the higher values of life. They - intelligent, the self-sacrificing hearts - were the pinnacles from which the streams of cultural and spiritual values flowed and permeated all levels of our society. They formed the perennial life-springs, that made, both these streams, i.e., of cultural sublimity and physical prosperity, flow to the brim in national life and made our nation a treasure-house of material and spiritual glory.

Mother Wants

Let us re-live those great ideals. Let us shake off the present-day emasculating notions and become real living men, bubbling with national pride, living and breathing the grand ideas of service,

self-reliance and dedication in the cause of our dear and sacred motherland. Only such a band of young men fired with a missionary zeal can rouse our people to action and ward off the grave perils threatening our country from inside and outside.

Let us feel ourselves fortunate to have been born in the present trying situation. Some may deem it a stroke of rare good luck to come into the world in a nation of peace and plenty, of power and glory. There are so many in our country today, who feel in that manner and go away to America, England etc., lured by the luxuries there. But men with ring of real heroism think otherwise and thank God that during their sojourn here they are faced with hardships, scarcity, adversity and trouble, through which they have to struggle on to prosperity. In times of affluence, our life will probably mean nothing more than 'to be born, to live happily for some time and die one day'. But in adverse circumstances we get an opportunity to put forth the best in us, to test our manliness and to stand before the world as a colossal personality full of grandeur. We are offered the chance to rise to our full stature, to soar to heights beyond the highest flights of human imagination.

Today, more than anything else, Mother needs such men - young, intelligent, dedicated and more than all virile and masculine. When Narayana-eternal knowledge- and Nara-eternal manliness- combine, victory is ensured. And such are the men who make history - men with capital 'M'.

36. Men with Mission

The mission of national reorganisation i.e., of uniting in a common abiding brotherhood all our brethren torn asunder for various reasons and making them fit for national service by training each one of them suitably, is a tremendously complex task involving the interplay of countless types of human natures. It naturally defies codification or framing of flat rules of behaviour. Each man has an individuality of his own and requires a distinct approach. So we shall here focus our attention only on the main guidelines of behaviour for a worker devoted to this national mission.

Tall but Useless

When persons begin to work as missionaries of national reconstruction, the chief impediment that comes up at every step is the absence of national consciousness and the spirit of organised life among the people. Therefore, they are tempted to pass judgement on others and look upon them as being low in comparison to themselves. This often gives rise to a sense of self-glorification and self-conceit. This is the first pitfall that a national worker has to avoid. If he starts with the presumption that all others are worthless, how can he work among the people and win their loving co-operation?

What is the use of being so 'tall' as will not allow one to mix with one's own people in a spirit of affection and comradeship? Saint Kabir has said:

“Uncha bhaya to kya bhaya
Jaise Taal Khajoor
Pathikan ko Chhaya nahin
Phal laage ati dur”

(*Oh what use are such great men who are like the tall palm and khajur trees which neither give shade nor allow a tired traveler to reach their fruits?*)

Comparatively even small trees capable of giving a little shade and a few fruits will be of use to him.

So if a worker has certain great qualities let him come down from his 'heights' to the level of the average man and share his greatness with the rest of his brethren in society. Let him become one with others without making others feel that he is something extraordinary. Even a remote shadow of separateness arising out of the consciousness of one's capacity and sacrifices should not be allowed to fall between oneself and the people. After all, the various virtues that a worker strives to cultivate in himself are for the sake of offering them at the feet of society. That is the essence of real greatness.

Making Men out of Dust

This is how all our great epoch-makers had, in the past, forged the scattered forces of our people into an invincible national strength. Shivaji mingled with the poor unlettered tillers of the soil with love and fellowship, reared them in a climate of idealism and turned them into conquering national heroes. He approached even those who were wallowing in slavery under the Muslim overloads and won them over to the cause of swadesh and swadharma. The peerless warrior Morarbaji Deshpande was one such priceless jewels, which he snatched from the enemy. He reconverted to our faith many, who had succumbed to the lures of Muslim women and the temptations and tyranny of Muslim powers. One of his generals, Netaji Palkar, who was captured and converted to Islam by Aurangzeb, later on escaped and came back to Shivaji. Shivaji took him back to the Hindu fold and lest others should shirk to

mix with him he established blood relations with him by giving one of the members of his own family in marriage to him. Similar was the case of Bajaji Nimbalkar who was taken back to the Hindu fold and his son wedded to the daughter of Shivaji himself. What a supreme vision Shivaji had of national consolidation!

In ancient times there is a parallel instance in the life of Sri Krishna. After Sri Krishna had rid the world of the menace of Narakasura and released the thousands of women abducted by him, a serious problem confronted the leaders of society. Then Sri Krishna, who was universally accepted as the supreme lawgiver because of his incomparable virtues of head and heart, himself came forward to give them an honourable status in society by formally declaring them all as his dharmic wives! In fact the highest dharma of a society is to find a place of dignity and usefulness for every one of its members however low he may be. Poet Moropant has told:

"Pari Prabhu hi sangrahi
Sakalavastula Theviti
Guna na mhanata Una
Adhik aadare seviti"

(*The great ones keep all things with them, recognising and respecting their worth whether it be little or great.*)

The Prerequisite

It is true that all are not alike either in virtues or weaknesses. All the same, they have to be brought together in a harmonious well-knit organisation wherein each one will be inspired to offer one's best to build a common pool of strength and virtues. To achieve this, a spirit of total identification with society is the first requisite for a national worker.

A Sadhu was once sitting with a dog in his arms lovingly sharing the leavings of food thrown on the roadside. A passer-by recognised in him a realised soul and went near him. But on seeing him, the Sadhu began to run and hurl stones in a bid to dissuade him from following. But seeing him pursuing undeterred, the Sadhu halted and asked him, "Why are you coming after me?" The man replied, "Sir, I know you have realised God. Please initiate me also into that path". The Sadhu told, "Well, do you see the gutter of the town flowing here? When you come to realise that this is in no way different from the waters of Ganga, you will have become competent to realise God". The work of social consolidation which is truly the realisation of Nation-God can be carried on only on the basis of such a spirit of identity as will render us capable of seeing a beggar in the street and a great scholar with an equal eye of love and brotherhood.

Avoid Pretensions

In this connection there is an important point that a national missionary has to bear constantly in mind. The behaviour of intimacy and affection with one and all should be devoid of all traces of affectations and pretensions. Nor should there be any room for fake feelings of compassion. An organisation cannot thrive on merely polished but empty mannerism. The worker`s feeling of fraternity must be natural and spontaneous. He must be able to look upon the entire society as a living manifestation of divinity and see in each individual the same spark of divinity irrespective of his external appearance. Our culture has always prompted us to acquire this eye of equality born out of the realisation of the inner unity.

Once, the boy-sage Ashtavakra (deformity incarnate!) entered the assembly of scholars in the court of the renowned philosopher-king Janaka. The assembled scholars could not suppress their laughter at the sight of the ugly form of the newcomer. The boy

calmly remarked, "I came here taking this to be an assembly of philosophers. But now I find that I have come to a wrong place as there are only cobblers and butchers here". The venerable assembly was shocked beyond all words. Janaka asked the boy to explain his statement. The boy-sage replied, "These gentlemen have identified me with my bones, flesh and skin. It is the butcher who deals in bones and flesh and the cobbler in skin. A real philosopher recognises the Spirit in man which is the same in all beings".

The Golden Blend

No one, however virtuous and great, should forget that others too possess sparks of virtues. It is presumptuous to imagine that the Almighty has handed over the lamp of knowledge only to a few and kept all others in darkness. Even our ancient rishis who proudly called themselves Aryas and had resolved to Aryanise the whole of humanity declared that others, the Mlechhas, too were capable of nobility and greatness. Our ancestors had the unique quality of owning others without compromising their own self-respect. The work of national reorganisation has to be carried on in the same spirit, i.e., of rejecting none and respecting all.

The first conviction with which a national worker should start is that all people are, or can be made, virtuous and good and capable of sharing responsibility and that none of them is intrinsically a fool or a traitor. Sometimes he may have to criticise some individual for their thoughts and actions, which go against the national well-being. But even while doing so, he must give due respect to their person and admit their good points.

Assert Faith in Goodness

In fact, recognising the good in others is one of the best, but rarest, of human virtues. The guiding principle for a worker

should be to water the seeds of virtues in others and, by presenting before them the silent example of his own superior conduct, carefully weed out their vices and defects without parading them before all. The advice of many worldly-wise men is to deal with people according to their worth purely in a 'business-like' spirit. But for a missionary devoted to organising the whole people, that would be the very antithesis of the attitude required of him. In spite of repeated rebuffs and insults at the hands of his brethren he will have to go to their doors again and again with the same spirit of love and service.

Once a Sadhu while bathing in a river saw a scorpion being carried away by the current. At once he stretched out his hand to rescue it. But stung by it he let it go. He again caught hold to it and tried to throw it on the bank. He was stung again. He repeated his attempts, got himself stung every time and finally threw the scorpion outside the water. The persons witnessing that amazing sight remarked what a fool he was to have attempted to save the scorpion again and again knowing its nature only too well. The Sadhu calmly replied, "Well, when even such a small dull creature does not give up its natural qualities, then should I, an intelligent human being, give up mine?"

Building Unshakable Comradeship

After all, in the case of our brethren in society, the question of their inborn hostility does not arise. Whatever indifference or opposition, that a worker may experience from others is often born out of their ignorance and is bound to be short-lived. So he should approach every individual, whatever be his present aptitude and position in life, in a spirit of friendliness and equality and with faith in his innate goodness. He must be confident of triumphing over the various weaknesses, vices and temperamental differences of others on the strength of his genuine love and regard for them and the example of his own sterling character.

Good character alone is not enough. There are persons endowed with pure character but who are rude and offensive in their speech and behaviour. They even pride themselves on their rudeness. They say, "I call a spade a spade. If it offends anyone I care two hoots". But a worker who is devoted to national reorganisation cannot afford to be so. Sweetness of speech is a 'must' for a national worker.

There is the story of a king who used to consult astrologers about his future. All the astrologers told him that he would live very long but his son would die before his very eyes. That shocking news would naturally infuriate him and he would punish those astrologers. Finally, an old astrologer approached him and said that he was a very fortunate man and would install his grandson on throne with his own hands. Immensely pleased, the king rewarded the astrologer handsomely! Instead of uttering the bitter prophecy like others, he said the same thing but in a sweet manner. And that made all the difference. So it has been said, Satyam brooyat, priyam brooyat (Speak truly, speak sweetly).

We have to be wary of one more common human failing - of indulging in slanderous criticism - and sarcastic comments about others. Of course, criticism and sarcasms too have their place in life. But they should be used very sparingly, just as even poison is sometimes used as medicine. But to indulge in them often and making it our habit would only degenerate us. Of course, it does not mean that we should always put on a wry and serious face and avoid buoyant laughter and delightful mirth. The Bhagavad-Gita describes the salient features of an ideal worker-

“Muktasangonahamvaadi
Dhrutyutsaaha samanvitah
Siddhyasiddhyor Nirvikaarah
Kartaa Saatvika uchyate”

(*He who is detached, egoless, steadfast, earnest and enthusiastic, and who is unruffled by success or failure - such a one is a worker of the sattvic type.*) It is only when the worker blends strength of character with sweetness of speech and behaviour in himself that he will be able to make others come together in a spirit of comradeship and stand up along with him under all trials and tribulations.

There is an instance of Chandrashekhar Azad, a name that has become a legend for character, courage and spirit of revolution. He was being hunted by the entire might of the British intelligence force. Once, when he was residing secretly with his friend who was a Government servant, the police besieged the house on suspicion. The friend tried to convince the police officers in loud tones of protest that he knew nothing about Azad. The friend's wife who was inside heard the voice. Chandrashekhar too was inside playing merrily with the children. It was the day of Sankranti. The lady made up her mind in an instant. She thundered in a tone of indignation, "You idiot of a servant, it is already late and you are idling away your time with the children! Get up, take the basket, we have to distribute sweets to our neighbours!" In an instant Chandrashekhar got himself up as a servant and with a basket on his head followed her out of the house before the very eyes of the police officers. Neither the basket nor Chandrashekhar returned after the 'distribution of sweets'! The person who would play and make merry as one among the children of the house, had at the same time converted that house into a veritable citadel of loyalty, courage and sagacity in the cause of the nation. That should be our method, that should be our ideal wherever we live and move.

The One Enemy of All Virtues

As the work progresses and gains in prestige and influence people naturally begin to praise the worker. And therein lies the danger spot for a worker. He starts feeling conscious of his capacity and influence and a sort of vanity develops in him. The repulsive odour of his ego begins to stink in the nostrils of those who come near him. They try to keep themselves away respectable distance from him. Saint Jnaneshwar has beautifully described the strange nature of ego:

"Sakal ahankaaraache goti
Vishesh na lage ajnanaache paati
Jnaniyaanche pade kanthi
Mahaasankati ghalitase"

(*Strange are the ways of ego. It does not touch the ignorant but clutches the learned by the throat and lands them in grave danger.*) The worker should therefore be extremely circumspect and not fall a prey to the deceptive tactics of ego. Vanity is the greatest enemy of all virtues. Temptations flow from vanity.

In our ancient literature there is the story of Jaimini, a disciple of the great sage Vyasa. Vyasa once asked him to write the shloka-

"Balavaanindriyagraamo
Vidvaansamapi karshati"

(*The pull of senses will distract even the scholars.*) But Jaimini, overconscious of his powers of self-restraint, changed the words into:

"Balavaanindriyagraamo
Vidvaansam Naapakarshati"

(*The pull of senses will not distract the scholar.*) Vyasa observed it but kept quiet for the time being. Jaimini was residing in a forest, engaged in penance. One evening rain and tempest set in. a

young and beautiful woman drenched in the rain and seeking shelter in that darkness came to the hut and begged the young tapasvi for protection. There was fire in the oven; she went there and began to dry her clothes. Just then a gust of wind took away her sari leaving her naked. The young Jaimini could no longer control himself. He approached the woman and entreated her to satisfy his carnal desire. She tried to dissuade him saying that he was a tapasvi; that he should not fall into temptation and so on but to no avail. Finally she accepted to fulfill his desire on the condition that he should take her on his shoulders and go round the fire three times. In his infatuation he readily agreed to it and lifted her on his shoulders. As soon as he began to go round the fire she began hitting his head and asking tauntingly – *vidvaansam naapakarshati* ? He was amazed to find that woman reminding him of the words of his guru. He finished his rounds and lowered the lady down only to find to his utter bewilderment his guru Vedavyasa himself looking at him with a meaningful smile! Jaimini was plunged in repentance. He hurried back and changed the shloka to its original form.

Be Self-Confident, Beware of Self-Conceit

All our great men have invariably commanded everyone, however good and virtuous he may be, to be humble and prudent in all his behaviour. It does not, however, mean that a worker should lose his self-confidence while moving with men or facing difficult situations. Self-confidence is in fact the very life-breath of all great workers.

It is the calm and steady and self-confident men that can move mountains. The picture of Winston Churchill, the old lion of England, standing erect on a heap of ruins in London, a city rained with bombs during the Second World War, and telling his countrymen that he had come there not to weep but with the

promise of blood, sweat, toil and tears-and victory! - gives us an idea of the powers of an unruffled and confident mind.

There is a beautiful story in Jain literature. Once Sri Krishna, Balarama and Satyaki were lost in a forest. They decided to spend the night beneath a tree, each keeping guard over the others for two hours. To start with, Satyaki kept awake and the other two slept. But shortly, a Brahmarakshasa (an evil spirit) jumped down form the tree and threatened Satyaki that he would eat up all the three persons. Satyaki got furious and began to fight with the Rakshasa. But to his bewilderment he found the Rakshasa growing in stature and strength. Satyaki was exasperated. After two hours, thoroughly exhausted, he awoke Balarama and went to sleep. As soon as Satyaki retired, the Rakshasa too disappeared for a while but again appeared when Balarama got up. Balarama, conscious of his tremendous strength, became wild with anger and began to combat. But he too met with the same fate. After fighting in vain for two hours he awoke Sri Krishna and went to sleep. The Rakshasa confronted Sri Krishna. But Sri Krishna kept calm. He was confident of his own overwhelming powers and knew how to deal with the demon. He started joking and playing and hitting the Rakshasa. And what a surprise! As Sri Krishna continued in this strain the Rakshasa began to diminish in size. Ultimately Sri Krishna caught hold of him and tied him in a corner of his garment. When Balarama and Satyaki woke up in the morning they were surprised to find Sri Krishna restful and tranquil as if nothing had happened. Their surprise turned into amazement when they found the dreaded Brahmarakshasa tied up as a small worm in corner of Sri Krishna's garment!

The tranquillity of mind born out of supreme confidence in one's own strength is an inexhaustible dynamo of power. Anger and excitement ruin the power of calm judgement and firm action.

However, a worker should not become a victim of self-conceit in the name of self-confidence nor should he lose self-confidence in an attempt to become unassuming and humble. The correct poise of mind should be cultivated assiduously.

A look at the great character in our past history will be an inspiring aid to develop such mental equanimity. How small and insignificant we appear before those towering personalities who had reached the pinnacles of selflessness, steadfastness and manliness! What is there in use to boast of in comparison with those giants of thought and action? We have not even acquired a drop of the ocean of knowledge that Shankaracharya had mastered in a short life-span of thirty-two years. Even as a young boy, he embraced the hard life of renunciation and walked the four distant corners of the land with the message of national resurrection. Single-handed, he moved earth and heaven and once again roused the people to the true consciousness of our traditional values of life. And still what a deep humility he had! At one place he says

“Satyapi bhedaapagame Naatha
Tavaaham na maamakeenastvam
Saamudro hi tarangah
Kvachana samudro na taarangah”

(*Though it is true that distinction between you and me has disappeared, Oh Lord, I belong to Thee, and not Thou to me, just as the ripple belongs to the ocean and not the ocean to the ripple.*)

The constant remembering of such radiant lives will illumine our hearts with its effulgence and inspire us to proceed in their footsteps with self-confidence and at the same time with self-effacement.

‘Egoless’ is Success

If there is even a trace of ego and vanity the worker will not be able to merge his life in the joys and sorrows of the people in true spirit of amity and identity. The rest of true friendship is the ability to remain unoffended in face of adverse comments. Even if a person says or does something, which in the eyes of others appears to harm or insult him and still he does not in the least feel its prick, then alone can he claim true friendship with that person.

There is a small poem, which gives out this idea beautifully. A young man and a young girl were in deep love with each other. But the parents of that girl would not allow her to marry him. So once they meet in a far-off place in solitude and the young man says in the poem, "I throttled and killed her; and she felt no pain!" It only means that when there is real love, there can be no pain or offence taken or given. If there is a feeling of having been offended, it means we have not really effaced the ego. This is the test we have to apply to ourselves on every such occasion.

It is only when the worker surrenders his ego completely and unreservedly at the altar of the great mission he has chosen, that he will be able to make himself its fit instrument. Only a good and well-tuned musical instrument can give rise to melodious notes in the hand of an expert. So also, when the worker rounds off the angularities of his egoistic nature, a pure and inspiring note of self-confidence and missionary zeal will be vibrant in all his talk and behaviour.

There are some, who say that the natural tendencies in man cannot be changed, that they are like the tail of a dog which curls up every time we try to straighten it up. This is only a half-truth, applicable to men without a mission in life. For a man with a mission, the message of-

"Nar karani kare to nar ka
Naraayan ban jay"

(*Man by his efforts can become God*) holds good. Remember, "Every saint has a past and every sinner a future". The attitude of "I am a no-changer, take me as I am", will be of little avail in building an organised life of the people. It is like a foot-rug with the letters "USE ME". Should there not be any difference between living men of dedication and a lifeless object? By regular contemplation and introspection the worker should imbibe all the necessary qualities and fashion his life for the successful working out of the chosen ideal.

One Life, One Mission

Through introspection the worker should be able to discern correctly to what extent he has progressed in identifying himself with the mission of building an organised national life, whether the mission has become his one all-consuming passion moving and swaying his thoughts, feelings and actions in company or in solitude. True character of a person lies in what he thinks and does when he is alone. Especially today when young minds are surrounded by innumerable temptations of modern civilisation like all sorts of vulgar pictures, songs, cinemas, novels and entertainments, the chances of his getting unconsciously permeated with those images are very high. One thousand and one distractions pull him in diverse directions and if he is not on his guard his mind will be tossed about like a rudderless ship on a stormy sea. Such an unsteady mind spells ruin to the individual. It is said:

"Avyavasthitachittanaam
Prasaadopi bhayankarah"

(*Even the solicitude of an unsteady mind is dangerous.*) Then

what to say of such a mind when it gets into a rage! The need for stringent self-introspection therefore becomes all the more necessary for a worker desirous of leading the life of a dedicated missionary in the present atmosphere of all-round distraction and dissipation.

Daily Self-Correction

To do this, it is necessary for the worker to sit in solitude daily in the mornings and nights and probe his mind. With a discerning intellect he must find out whether any unworthy thought had entered his mind. If so, he should resolve to throw them out and become purer from the next day. He should detach his mind from unholy associations and make it immersed in thoughts concerning the chosen mission of his life. It is possible that he succumbs to the same failings on the next day also. But he need not despair. He should continue the daily self-searching and assertion of his holy resolve. He will, in course of time, find that his mind has become less prone to evil propensities and more attuned to the noble impulses.

The daily recitation of our Prarthana is a powerful aid in this process. One should be particular not only in the correct pronunciation of its each and every word and syllable but also about the thought-content of every word. Such repeated impressions will, in course of time, percolate into the depths of one's thought-processes and shape one's character accordingly.

By such a constant and conscious application of his will a worker can attain the state of complete concentration on his chosen path of national resurgence in spite of worldly distractions. For, the forces of purity and divinity are for more potent than the evil pulls and always stand by such a worker spreading their angelic wings over each one of his humblest and honest efforts and take him

from strength to strength. Then the only joy and solace of his life will lie in the fulfillment of that ideal. All other external attractions will become insipid before that joy.

There are two instances in the life of Lokamanya Tilak, which strikingly reflect his mental equanimity and concentration on his ideal, under two diametrically opposite situations. Once his son became seriously ill. Tilak was attending to the treatment of his son but was also taking care to fulfill his editorial work of 'Kesari' in time. One day when he was busy writing the editorial, news reached him that his son's condition had become critical. Tilak sent back the messenger saying, "I will finish the writing and then come there; call the doctor and see what can be done". When Tilak, after his writing, reached home his son was already dead. And he went through his son's final ceremonies with perfect steadiness and composure of the mind.

The other incident was when he was taken to the music performance of a famous songster. The audience was thrilled and moved by the music but Tilak sat unmoved, impassive. The songster observed it and later on asked Tilak whether the music was not to his taste. Tilak replied, "No doubt, you sing extremely well. But my ears are completely filled with the divine music of the Song of the Lord, Bhagavad-Gita, and hence I was unable to enjoy your music".

The Joy of Self-Surrender

The springs of spontaneous joy and inspiration that rise in a heart charged with such a spirit of total surrender to the ideal will defeat all forces of darkness and despair. There is a story of two yogis who were doing intense penance for realising God. Narada, who was on his way to the abode of God, was requested by these two yogis to know from him for how many more births they had

to carry on their penance to realise God. Narada on his way back again met the two yogis. To the first he said, "Only four more births." Hearing this reply the yogi became crestfallen and began wailing, “Oh Lord, still four more births!" To the other, Narada said, "You have to wait till you take as many births as there are leaves in the yonder tamarind tree". But Narada was amazed to see him start dancing with joy. When Narada asked him the reason, he replied, "Now I have got only a definite number of births before I reach God. After that I am assured of meeting God. What a great solace it is!" And just as he uttered these words a divine voice was heard, "You are even at this moment a realised soul!" Such a spirit of joyous perseverance, absolute faith and unshakable will can achieve miracles.

Excelsior!

No great work is achieved without great suffering and sacrifice. The worker will be required to pay a heavy price in terms of his personal and family happiness and similarly embrace a life of the troubles and dangers in treading the path of the ideal. The glowing example of Sri Rama is there as the guiding star for the hazardous voyage of a life duty. Even as a boy, he was taken from his parents by Vishwamitra, away from a princely life to a forest life, to fight the rakshasa. Later, after he had won the hand of Sita and was returning to Ayodhya he had to face the terrible Parashurama. And then before he could heave a sigh of relief and taste happiness, he had to leave for a fourteen-year wilderness in forest. Those fourteen years too were full of ordeals and struggle with rakshasa, abduction of Sita by Ravana and the great war at Lanka. As he returned to Ayodhya and was anointed as the king he had to give up Sita in response to the call of kingly duties. Lakshmana, who had followed him like a shadow in all these tribulations and was like the very breath and soul of Rama, too had to be given up to assuage the wrath of Durvasa who would have otherwise destroyed Ayodhya. Verily his was a life

unparalleled by all standards of character and calibre and unparalleled in suffering and sacrifice too.

There is a small poem which tells the story of a young man who goes out in rains and tempest on a mountainous path with a banner held aloft in his hand bearing the insignia 'Excelsior'. In that darkness, after a time he sees a small hut with a light burning inside. As he nears it, an old lady comes out of the hut and stops him saying, "Where are you going, my boy, in this rain and tempest? I have no son of my own. Please stay here as my child enjoying all this property". But the young man has no mind to listen to her. By then her charming daughter comes out and addresses that handsome and robust young man in her bewitching tone: "I had not offered my heart to anyone till now. But now I have given myself over to you. Please stay here". The reply of the young man is as adamant as ever. He says, "I go forward. Nothing can stop me", and proceeds onward.

One such instance happened in the life of Tatya Tope, the great general of the 1857 War of Independence. Azijan, a young Muslim dancing girl, was struck by the manly beauty of the general. She employed her charms to captivate his heart. But Tatya Tope told her, "Well, you know that the one passion of my life is driving out the English. There is no place in me for any other thought. But if you really love me and desire to bring joy to my heart, then you also join hands with me in this noble cause". Azijan agreed instantly. She gave away all her money to Tatya Tope and, in pursuance of his designs, went to the English army camp. There she lured those captains by her charms and shadowed their movements and conveyed their plans to the leaders of the national uprising. She remained faithful to the cause up to her heroic end in the war itself.

Such are the men who can, by a mere touch, turn base metal into gold, turn the severest of difficulties into opportunities and even

temptations into their allies in the grand battle for achieving their ideal. In the words of Swami Vivekananda they 'worship the Terrible' and love to live dangerously. With the fiery energy of youth in their nerves, the flash of idealism in their eyes, steadfast and unruffled amidst all storms of temptations and adversities, and radiating inspiration all round, they press forward triumphantly from success to success till they achieve the goal of their dreams.